

THE STUDENT WORLD

A quarterly magazine published at 13 Rue Calvin. Geneva
by the World's Student Christian Federation

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VOLUME XLIX

Fourth Quarter, 1956

NUMBER 4

Latin American Notes

Only five years ago, a European writer hailed in powerful accents the presence of Latin America on the complex scene of contemporary life. This was not, of course, an effort to call attention to an historical situation, already well known and explored, but to recognize a new and increasingly important factor in international affairs. *The Student World* has already echoed the significance of this vast region of our world by devoting a special issue to it two years ago ; with this present number it witnesses to the uninterrupted continuity of the dialogue.

Historical evolution has determined that the two Americas should follow different roads. A common geographical axis has not been reflected in a common cultural axis. Different origins, different lines of material and spiritual development — the one Saxon, the other Latin — have traced the profiles of two cultures and two civilizations each with its own characteristic features. The term "Latin America" refers to an immense section of the American continent, discovered, populated and colonized by the Iberian peoples ; it points to a world, stretching from the Rio Grande to the Tierra del Fuego, inhabited by one hundred and eighty million people, a very high percentage of whom speak the language of Cervantes and Camoens.

This America has been Spanish and Portuguese ; today, despite its origin, it is uniquely American. The waves of humanity that migrated to its soil blended their blood with that of the

indigenous "copper race", and in flesh as well as in spirit created the American man. In his life, his ideals, his struggles, his renunciations and his hopes, he is unique.

True, the historical and cultural unity of Latin America cannot blind us to its rich and complex composition. It is a unity with diversity. We know that in the past the indigenous peoples engaged in unceasing wars; that the conquest perpetuated these rivalries in the political division it imposed upon the lands discovered by Columbus; that at a time when an ardent zeal for independence reigned among the American patriots, the war to vanquish the Spanish was paralleled by the development of narrow nationalism. Thus, up to the time of the Chaco war, we witness conflicts among rival states with no complete resolution of the causes of tension.

To this political division we must add such geographical factors as topography, the nature of the soil and sub-soil, the vast network of rivers, and the variations in climate, all of which favour some nations and impoverish others. From the ethnical point of view, it is obvious to any anthropologist that there is a white America, an indigenous America, and an America that is *mestiza*. Some countries feel the racial question is vital; others ignore it completely. Some know the benefits of social justice; others are only awakening to its necessity.

Yet there is only one Latin America. The historical evolution of this heterogeneous group of communities moves in a single direction, facilitated by the relative unity of its people. The essential basis of that homogeneity is linguistic unity — Brazil is the exception, but it has a very similar language — and also the Christian motives that provided the incentive for the conquest. Americanism is in the basic mentality of these peoples, and is expressed in a feeling of autonomy which becomes defiance in the face of a foreign power. In turn, Latin blood has generously nourished the indigenous stock. Language, traditions, a taste for encounter of ideas in intellectual life, all show the close relationship of these peoples with Latin civilization. This relationship is the reason for the union of the two terms — Latin and America — to form an adequate description of this area. It is the reason for the existence of the ideal of Latin American solidarity, asserted by Bolivar,

as an ever-living force and as a characteristic of the Latin American mentality. A nationalism that, in spite of the vast extent of these countries, lays claim to the smallest area which still belongs to colonial governments, allies itself with the profound aspirations which are commonly expressed with a united voice in Pan-Americanism. In addition, common legislation passed by various countries, cultural agreements, and the development of communications give the new Latin world special and unique features.

In our day — a sign of the times — Latin America knows and lives amid profound transformations. Proletarian revolution coincides with the awakening of indigenous groups and with the demands of the farmer. In this situation, factors which mould international politics — the crisis of economic and political liberalism, the new social techniques, the participation of the masses in public life — are also operative here. But in Latin America the process is going on at such an accelerated pace that it becomes impossible to achieve any stability. Democracy has a precarious existence due to the absence of a true middle class to serve as its base, and social revolution occurs before any equilibrium has been established in political life.

With some healthy exceptions, opportunism has become a political vocation; an intellectual *élite* lives divorced from social realities, and a military hierarchy decides, sometimes with a regard for human lives, sometimes not, the course of the nations' history. Nevertheless, ideals of freedom and social justice are gradually finding expression in the constitutions of these countries, for example, reforms which have been brought about by Mexican syndicalism, Uruguayan *ballism*, and the Chilean labour union movement. There is the well-known story of the idealistic Argentine student movement that, in 1918, in the intellectual centre of Cordoba, determined to fight for the national and economic independence of America, for the reconciliation of classes and for social justice.

Finally, there is a lack of any integration in cultural life. On the one hand — a sign of youth — there is a certain susceptibility of the American to all foreign influences, especially European. The intelligentsia are swept away by streams of thought and art that have their origin in foreign lands. Only

yesterday, under the wing of a dictatorship beheaded today, some out-of-date characters met and strove to bring to life an American version of the ancient Spanish empire. On the other hand, there is a growing surge of indigenous cultural expressions that are striving, by thought and action, to expand steadily beyond their narrow regional confines. Tension between these two trends still exists.

On this ever-moving battlefield, Christian witness has also made itself heard. It is true that the great majority of the people of these lands, colonized in the name of Christ and traditionally Roman Catholic, live nominally Christian lives that produce the most extravagant expressions, ranging from the crassest superstition to the most intransigent anti-clericalism. This is officially recognized in religious circles, which do not hide their concern. The evangelistic command of Christ has been heeded by the Protestant churches — usually called “Evangelical” — that have established themselves in Latin America. The whole task of Protestantism must be stamped with the seal of evangelization and of the education which goes hand in hand with it. Missionary zeal inspires the dynamic expansion of the Church of Christ, which in Latin America is made up of several generations of Christians with a real experience of salvation and the new life. This notable effort — which has had its martyrs, some of them in recent days — has spread throughout all the countries and has found a fitting response, especially among the humble working classes.

Nevertheless, as a result of an often hostile environment, there is a tendency among Evangelicals towards isolationism and escapism. An excessive emphasis on the subjective elements of devotional life has resulted in a certain inability to relate the experience of the Christian believer to the problems he meets in everyday life. The conflict experienced by a Christian conscience living between the puritanical ethic presented in the home and church and the naturalistic ethic that prevails in society, is especially acute, and makes the problem of personal conduct particularly difficult.

The divorce between faith and the various areas of society and culture is a matter of deep concern to Latin American SCMs, and they are working to overcome it. The Cochabamba

conference, held at the beginning of this year, marks an important stage in this effort and gives promise for the future. Not long ago Paul Ricœur pointed out that Christians need to be constantly aware of the permanent and unchanging aspects of the Gospel as they face their contemporary situation. To the transient wisdom of the world, the message of the Cross will always be a scandal. But that message proclaims a Kingdom hidden in Christ, a reconciliation already accomplished, and a "summing up" of all things in Him, who is King of kings and Lord of lords. True, the Christian lives today the tensions between faith and culture, and complete unity will only be realized in the coming Kingdom, but we must not let paradox and stress become for us a permanent alibi. The life of faith carries within it the demand to re-create the positive values of an historical era. The task of our student groups is to show how Christian life and thought, aware of the problems presented by contemporary culture, are the "best opportunity for the expression and development of the modern man's — and, for that matter, of the American man's — most cherished values".

The World's Student Christian Federation has had a growing contact with Latin America for a long time, but it was during the period 1949 — 1952 that it began a decisive stage with the appointment of a secretary especially for that region, and with the organization of the first leadership training conference at Sitio das Figueiras (São Paulo) in July, 1952. Since then, work has increased, all countries have been visited, and most of them have SCM groups, only beginning in some cases, already firmly established in others. Two more conferences, bringing together representatives of countries north and south of the equator, were held in Matanzas, Cuba, in 1954, and in Cochabamba, Bolivia, in 1956, and provide clear evidence of a student generation which, through local SCMs, bears witness to a Presence which saves and redeems.

M. L.

The Strategy of the SCM in the Universities of Latin America

VALDO GALLAND

The objective

The word "strategy" according to the dictionary means "the art of directing military operations". The purpose of these operations is to gain the victory. So when we speak of the strategy of the SCM, we might suppose that our purpose is to gain the victory. If so, we should be making a serious mistake. As a Christian movement, our objective cannot possibly be to gain the victory. For the victory has already been fully won by our leader, Jesus Christ. Were we to think it fell to us to win the victory, we should be denying the very foundation of the Christian faith, and the SCM would cease to be truly Christian.

This does not imply that we have no battle to fight, or that we need no strategy. As Christians, we know well that life is a battle. So we need a strategy, and the strategy must have an objective. Since the final victory is already won, our objective can only be to consolidate the victory. We still have our little personal and SCM victories to win; but by their very nature they are relative, and will have no value unless they reflect, and consequently confirm, the victory won by Christ. Our objective or our aim is thus nothing other than evangelism, which is the proclamation and the confirmation of the absolute victory won by Jesus Christ.

In Latin America, when we speak of evangelism, we must always re-emphasize that to evangelize is not the same as to convert. Obviously, when we proclaim the victory of Christ, it is our earnest desire that those who hear our message should be won to Christ and be converted. But it is not we who convert. It is the living Christ who converts, He to whom we bear witness in our words and actions (in Evangelical churches in Latin America, the word "witness" often has only the meaning of

good conduct ; but they should be reminded that verbal proclamation is an essential part of its true meaning). Our witness leaves room for the presence of Jesus Christ and His sovereign action upon those who hear the Gospel. The various kinds of pressure used in evangelizing should be resorted to very rarely, for in the majority of cases they imply doubt of the power of Jesus Christ's own action. Real evangelization only occurs when the affirmation of the absolute victory of Christ is not only a simple repetition of a Christian dogma, but a reality in the life of him who evangelizes. For it is then that Christ Himself acts.

Our strategy, then, as far as our objective is concerned, may be summed up by saying that it is to bear witness and not to convert.

The composition of the army

The effective force of our SCMs should be composed essentially, that is to say, include a numerical majority, of "Evangelicals". The word "Evangelical" is used here in two senses.

First in its etymological sense. The evangelicals are those who live by the Gospel, the Evangel, the good news of the mercy of God in Jesus Christ. The confessional sense, equivalent to Protestant, which this word has acquired in Latin America, is secondary. There may be evangelicals in the Roman Catholic Church ; from the non-Roman Christian's point of view they would have a bad theology, but that does not alter the fact that in some intuitive way they live very close to the fundamental truth of the Gospel without complicating their lives with all the dogmas and rites of their church. This possibility exists even in Latin America, in spite of the spiritual condition of the Roman Church being so poor. The witness of a brigadier of the Salvation Army, who worked for sixteen years in São Paulo, will remain engraved on my memory ; she assured me she had known some Brazilian Catholic women who were profoundly Christian, who belonged to Christ, and with whom she had been able to pray. But as opposed to this possibility, we must point out a sad reality : many "Evangelicals" (in the confessional sense) are not so in the etymological sense ; they do not live

by the Gospel ; they may know it very well, and even be very doctrinaire about it, but they do not live by it.

In spite of what has been said, we must also admit the confessional sense of the word "evangelical" to characterize our majority force in the SCM army. Here are at least three reasons for doing so : (a) In our continent with its strong Roman Catholic tradition, the majority of the "Roman Catholic evangelicals" who do not complicate their lives with the dogmas of their church do not complicate them either with the ecumenical problems of non-Romans, and consequently they remain in their own organizations. It is only a minority who will complicate their lives by forgetting that they are forbidden to communicate with "heretics" ; (b) proportionally, I am sure, there are more evangelicals (in the etymological sense) among the Evangelicals (in the confessional sense) than among the Roman Catholics ; on the other hand, Protestants are much freer to join with people who do not belong to their church ; (c) because of their ecumenical character, the Evangelical churches can give their semi-official and even official support to the SCM, a thing which the Roman Catholic Church cannot do.

Secondly, the effective force of our army can and must count on "men of good will", that is to say, on people who have reached the point of being interested in the Gospel and the aims of the SCM without getting as far as professing the Christian faith. The cooperation of these people is of primary importance if the SCM is to be effective. Their presence will prevent the SCM from being too much shut in upon itself. But it is understood that these "men of good will" help and do not lead. The only danger in having too many of them is that they could change the purpose of the SCM and turn it into a religious, philosophical or university society, or even into a social club, which would then cease to be Christian. The SCM would thus provide justification for those student Christian organizations which remain exclusive for fear of the dangers of the world.

Here are a few necessary considerations on the subject of the numerical force of the SCM. Since the foregoing shows that there are few Protestant students, few Roman Catholic evangelicals interested in ecumenism, and great danger of the SCM being swamped by "men of good will", it is clear that for many

years the SCM will continue to be a small minority. Two dangers follow : (a) a superiority complex, with the conviction that truth is only to be found among minorities, making their witness in the manner of a judge, without charity and with a feeling of self-sufficiency which paralyses the expansion of the SCM ; (b) an inferiority complex which causes the SCM to redouble its efforts to increase its importance by increasing its numbers ; many irregular members and friends are admitted, people who have finished their studies or young people who are not students ; in this case, if the SCM remains Christian, it ceases to be Student. It is very clear that the stronger SCMs have their own dangers, but these are not the problems of the SCM in Latin America. To conclude these considerations by paraphrasing Karl Barth (who has written : "Truth is not either in the Yes or the No, but in God from whom proceeds the Yes and the No"), we shall say that truth lies not with the minority nor the majority, but with God on whom depend both the majorities and the minorities.

To sum up, our strategy as far as the SCM army is concerned will consist in safeguarding both the Christian and the Student character of the SCM, so that it may be an effective instrument of evangelism among students.

The battle-field

We enter here the field of the university, and we must keep in mind its double aspect as a collective personality and as a collection of individuals. This double aspect of the real nature of the university inspires a double evangelism, one individual and the other collective.

The kind of evangelism which I call individual is that in which the Gospel is proclaimed in such a way as to reach every individual person in the depths of his being. It is not merely a conversation between two speakers, a Christian and a non-Christian. It includes still other possibilities : declarations made by a Christian to a group, large or small, of people interested in the Gospel. And again, the witness of several Christians to one who is not. In either case the target is each individual himself, and the content of the message must be what the

Gospel has to say to every person in his own situation. The characteristic of this kind of evangelism is the sincere affection which binds the one or more evangelists and the one or more who are evangelized. It is helpful to recall here the words spoken at Evanston by our Chairman, D. T. Niles: "Anyone calling himself a Christian who has no unbeliever for a friend is not truly Christian, for the zeal for evangelism is lacking in him."

But in Latin America it seems to me more necessary to insist on the other aspect of evangelism, the collective aspect. The concept of collective evangelism shocks us largely because we are under the influence of an excessive individualism, partly also because when we speak of evangelism we are so eager to think about the possible results that we confuse the latter with the former. Many wishing to oppose the idea of collective evangelism object that conversion is a personal experience. Who would deny it? But are we talking of evangelism, or of conversion which is its possible result? Let us not confuse those two distinct things. One is the cause, the other the effect. Conversion is possible thanks to the proclamation of the Gospel, thanks to evangelism. If we consider evangelism as the proclaiming of the Gospel, and if we overcome the temptation to use it as converters, thus taking the place of Jesus Christ, there is no difficulty in distinguishing collective from individual evangelism. Both are identical in their essence — the proclaiming of the Gospel — but differ in their purpose: in one case an individual person and in the other a collective personality is concerned. Individual evangelism is the proclamation of the meaning of the Gospel for each individual, whereas collective evangelism proclaims the meaning of the Gospel for human communities.

If we are to be convinced of the necessity of this second aspect of evangelism, we must learn to take seriously, as the Bible does, these human communities: family, social group, association, town, corporation, nation, humanity and the rest. The majority of the difficulties we meet in reading the Scriptures arise from the fact that our concepts are too individualistic. There is always someone trying to justify individualism by invoking the Gospel, without realizing that the Gospel thus

invoked is already being given an individualistic interpretation. Let it be understood that there must be no falling into the other extreme of collectivism or "community-ism". But we must bear in mind that, according to the Bible, God takes communities seriously. Let it suffice to recall the importance which St. Paul attaches to the authority of nations. For Christians who are university students, the university as such has a personality in the eyes of God who will use it for His purposes. What are the merciful plans of God for the university? In other words, what has the Gospel to say to the university? Let us not forget that many members of the university, hearing what the Gospel has to say to it, will want to know what the Gospel has to say to themselves; and conversely, many students who have heard the meaning of the Gospel for their own lives, will want to know its meaning for the university.

So to resume our strategy in as far as it concerns the scene of battle, we shall say that we must recover the positive concept of collectivity or community if our evangelism in the university is to be complete and include both the individual and the collective aspects.

Fronts of operations

We shall pick out three: one related to individual evangelism, and two related to collective evangelism.

The first front of operations is the one we usually consider as our only one: the one composed by every individual person forming part of the university, particularly our companions. Since this is the front of operations most commonly accepted, it will not be necessary to speak at length about it. Let us simply dot two or three of the "i's". Let us point out first that it is not simply our fellow students who are involved, but also the teaching staff and graduates, for in Latin America we define the university as a community of students, professors and graduates. Another suggestion would be not to forget the employees of the university, who are often more nearly our neighbours than the graduates or even the teaching staff. In every case, our action must spring out of deep fellow feeling.

The two fronts related to collective evangelism depend on the two principal aspects of the university: its organization

and its function. The primordial aspect, without any doubt, is its function, which in turn has two aspects. In the first place, its function proper, which I shall call the "cultural", which consists in receiving, preserving, connecting, increasing and transmitting human knowledge. Secondly, its social function; through the very fact that the university is not the whole community, but a special community within a greater community, it is at the service of the latter. As for the front corresponding to the organization of the university, it has, in our Latin American continent, many aspects, among which we should select university autonomy, the student's participation in government, university resources and income, the quality of the teaching staff, the conditions of life of the students, physical equipment, and so on.

Taking into account these battle-fronts and our Latin American situation, the following suggestions for an effective strategy might be made.

We cannot lose sight for an instant of our witness to specific people when university questions preoccupy us, especially as the existence of these preoccupations does not necessarily mean that we are aware of our responsibility for collective evangelism. Sometimes they are the outcome of an attitude which is doubtless very generous, but no more than human, without any evangelistic quality. And even when we are preoccupied by university problems in the name of the collective evangelization of the university, we must remember that the people whose problems these are, are more important than the problems.

In what concerns the front presented to us by the organization of the university, we must cast down some of the idols firmly established in the soul of the Latin American university. We have, for example, what we might call the dogma of university autonomy, according to which a university is only truly a university if it enjoys absolute autonomy in relation to the state. Supporters of this thesis quote every instance of government trying to impose an ideology on the university, thus limiting freedom of investigation. It is obvious that this danger is very real in our countries. But the fundamental error of this thesis is the assumption that the citizens who compose the university are normally better than those who

form the government. In any event, to make the idea of university autonomy an absolute is to contradict the concept of the social function of the university.

Another idol in our midst is student participation in university government. In his book entitled *The Latin American University*, the Peruvian Luis Alberto Sanchez devotes several pages to establishing the principle of student participation in the government. In opposing the arguments on the other side, he is led to analyze the situation in the North American universities. His argument consists in showing that the non-participation of North American students in the government of the universities is explained by the superior level of education and culture in the United States, which is equivalent to saying that student participation in university government depends on circumstances; in a higher social and cultural situation, this participation is not fundamental. In a word, we must refuse to let it be established as an absolute principle.

A third idol, more general, is the pronounced taste for questions of organization and regulation. Our great Latin American failing is legalism! How many hours we waste setting up and discussing systems of regulation, creating and then modifying organizations, instituting posts and titles (which consciously or unconsciously the majority hope to assume or receive and exhibit). In the university itself, the student may waste precious time getting too deeply involved in questions of organization. This does not mean that we should not take any part in the administrative and political life of the university; we should do so in the hope of improving the organization. But this activity should not for a moment prevent our realizing what is truly essential: our mission regarding the function of the university. If we forsake this function and wear ourselves out trying to improve the organization, it is as though we were trying to make a corpse walk. It is a mistake to think that only a perfect organization can perform its functions correctly. Let us not forget that as we exercise the function, the necessary organ develops.

In the end, the essential is study, the cultural function from which arises as a consequence the social function, since it is as students that we prepare ourselves to serve our neigh-

bours. Thus the SCM, without despising the problems of organization, will concentrate its efforts on the problems represented by study in itself. In its very life, the SCM will attach more importance to study than to its own organization. It must make this principle its own: organization for study's sake and not study for organization's sake.

Our weapons

To describe them, I shall take as my inspiration the two great commandments (Mark 12: 30-31): "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength... and thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." In Hebrew thought, the heart was the centre of human personality and the seat of the faculties, which were reduced to the three principal ones: soul, mind and strength. They find expression through faith, intellect and will, and all these qualities are given to us that we may love God in loving our neighbours. Our weapons are consequently faith, intellect, will and love.

Faith does not mean primarily nor essentially beliefs, doctrines or dogmas. It is before all and above all trust, the giving of one's self, submission, obedience, in gratitude to God and His Son, Jesus Christ. And it is only then, as a consequence, that it can be considered as a belief. Faith is only maintained by constantly renewed communion in Christ. Faith implies a life of prayer, the study of the Bible in order to grow in knowledge of the fullness of Christ.

Intellect is given to us to understand the things that we have received, those revealed as well as those created. Intellect applied to things revealed leads to theology and doctrine; applied to the created world, it expands knowledge and culture. On the subject of the first point we must stress that there is no sound doctrine or sound theology *per se*, simply for the sake of orthodoxy; in this case, doctrine would be like the talent hidden in the field, unproductive. Doctrine must always be elaborated with a view to communicating the faith. On the second point, it is fitting to recall that intellect has absolute freedom to develop human knowledge; since it is concerned

with investigating the created world, neither scientific dogma nor religious dogma should oppose this research.

The will, in the case of the intellectual and therefore of the student, is applied chiefly to the effort to coordinate Christian faith and doctrine with human knowledge. This coordination is possible in a world controlled by a single will — God's will. In introducing these two great commandments, Jesus said (v. 29) : "The Lord is one." This coordination is also necessary for the man who wishes to fulfil his vocation and who refuses to be a split personality — the "heart" is the symbol of the unity of man. It happens unfortunately often that faith and knowledge develop separately in the same person. They always end by losing their authenticity. It is only together that they respectively reach their fullest development. Faith illuminating knowledge gives a meaning to scientific and cultural activity, and teaches us that all that we do we do "in addition", as a gift of God and for His glory ; learning in the service of faith makes it increase not only in us but in others, since it gives it the power of more effective communication, since it provides a more current language in which to transmit the eternal Gospel in the circumstances of every day. We must use our wills to try to reach this synthesis. To evangelize in the university, the necessity of thorough study is absolute.

All the activities of faith, intellect and will are expressed in love for one's neighbour. We might say that the second commandment is implicit in the first, since the soul expresses itself in faith and faith implies its communication to others ; we desire the supreme good for others, that is to say, we love our neighbour. In the same way, the use of our mind and our strength, of our intelligence and our will, is sure to lead us to take an interest in others. For us SCMerS, that means taking an interest and a part in university life.

After this exposition of general principles, let us see what we should recommend for an effective strategy.

Bible study is a fundamental activity of the SCM. It is here, and with prayer, that our faith is nourished. This study should be serious. We must fight against the magical idea of the Bible, that it is enough just to read it to hear automatically the Word of God. And we must equally fight against the

identification of the Bible with a purely human book. For our study to be serious, we must use commentaries and consult various translations. As students we should not restrict ourselves to Valera's translation only (I am referring here to Spanish-speaking students); and as Protestants of the Spanish-American world, we should be ashamed that we do not have the Bible in the really vulgar tongue, according to the good Reformation principle of providing the Scriptures in the popular tongue.

We need next to work on Christian doctrine with the help of our intellect. This doctrine can never be static, but must be dynamic. Not so that we may flatter ourselves that we are orthodox, but so that we may give account of our faith. Because of its evangelistic purpose, doctrine cannot be inflexible; its formulation must evolve. At this point we must confront the heresy of fundamentalism, much more dangerous than the heresy of modernism in Latin America. By means of our intellect, and alongside our elaboration of a doctrine, we must cultivate ourselves, increase our knowledge, our learning and our culture. The SCM will always be the defender of the liberty of scientific investigation, and opposed to both religious dogmatism and scientific dogmatism. In this sense, the position of the SCM between the conservatism of the churches and the materialism of the universities is not at all easy.

And now we come to the use of our will. And this is where the Latin American SCMs should turn vigorously to making a synthesis between faith and knowledge acquired through study. This is what we lack most, when we try to communicate our faith to our companions. We need to give more importance to the study program in the SCM. We must fight against intellectual superficiality and against vain discussions which we extend indefinitely for the pleasure of discussing. We must learn to discuss less and study more. We must also acquire the art of studying together. Our study must be serious. The greatest sin of the Christian student is intellectual laziness. As an example of this kind of work, let us take our concept of the university. Is it perhaps enough to adopt the concept of the Latin American Union of Universities and to criticize our institutions because they are far from the ideal set up

by this body ? Ought not our concept to include some theological appreciation ? Our SCMs should come to realize that the university, as a place to study, to get to know the created world, to develop a culture, is a gift of grace from God, given in creation and restored in redemption. Every criticism of the university without this positive vision is sterile. And criticism is only legitimate if it contains the proclamation of the grace of God to the university.

Love is the weapon which controls all the rest. We have referred to it inevitably in speaking of the others. It is enough here to underscore the fact that everything we undertake must be animated by love, and that the love of our neighbour will lead us precisely to intervene in university life and to take the social function of the university seriously. In the first case, we shall be able to take part in political student life, the strikes, the efforts to improve things, and so on. In the second case, we shall keep alive the feeling of the mission of the university to the nation. To do this, it will be well that the SCM takes seriously its possibilities of social work in the way of free consultations (in medicine and in law), industrial or work camps, student centres and hostels, and so on. But in both these aspects of practical activity, the SCM must not lose sight of the fact that the first should be carried on for the sake of the cultural function of the university, and the second should derive from it. We should not forget that this cultural function is central to the university, and that the most important failings of our universities are related to it.

I am convinced that this strategy — which may be modified as circumstances require — will permit the SCM, while remaining under the leadership of the victorious Christ, to accomplish more effectively than hitherto its mission to the universities of Latin America.

The Political Responsibility of Christian Students in Latin America

JOSÉ MIGUEZ BONINO

Only a highly qualified specialist should dare approach such a theme as the one announced in our title. Specialists, however, prefer not to risk their opinions on such controversial questions. It is left, therefore, to laymen in such matters to rush in where angel-specialists fear to tread. The writer of this article claims no other qualifications than his deep interest in, and restlessness about, this question. He will consider himself abundantly rewarded if these lines provoke better equipped people to take up discussion of the subject. This discussion is, at any rate, vitally important if student Christian youth in Latin America are to assume the burden of responsibility which their historical situation forces upon them.

The complexity of the question does not spring only from the variety of situations and problems confronting us in Latin America, but also from the impossibility of isolating the Latin American situation from the larger world perspectives. The factors moulding contemporary world politics: the crisis of political and economic liberalism, the new social techniques (Mannheim), the thrust of the masses into the political scene (Ortega y Gasset), and the world scale which any political problem tends to assume, decisively affect our situation and complicate our analysis.

In the following pages I shall attempt : 1) to sketch an analysis of the Latin American political situation in its historical *Sitz im Leben* (confining myself chiefly to the Argentine situation as a "case" — though I know it is not fully typical) ; 2) to make some brief remarks about the record of student youth in political affairs in Latin America ; and 3) to mention some considerations that, in my opinion, a Latin American Christian student ought to take into account in making his decision about his political responsibility.

I. THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN LATIN AMERICA

Historical background

One cannot approach the political situation at any given point in history without taking account of previous history. I shall therefore make a few remarks about Latin American political history as it bears on the contemporary scene.

Latin American political patterns have been shaped by two contradictory Spanish forces: the authoritarian Habsburg tradition, and the more liberal Bourbon tradition. This polarity of the two Spains has been transferred to America. Habsburg politics were nurtured in the Counter-Reformation and neo-scholasticism, creating an iron-clad system of unbreakable convictions which the *Conquistadores* bring with them to the new continent. This Hispanic-conscious and Catholic-conscious policy employs the inquisition and the colonial system as instruments, and creates an unrealistic and suicidal absolutism in America. Religious intolerance, absolute Spanish monopoly, the complete subordination of natives, the absolute right of the Crown, theoretical legislation based on theological principles rather than in the concrete reality, arbitrary and irrational economic exploitation, the ignoring of socio-political movements taking root among the new *criollo* population (natives of Spanish extraction) — all these are characteristic of Habsburg politics.

The liberal movement, which flowers in Europe in the transition from the seventeenth to the eighteenth century, enters Spain with the Bourbons (1700). Slowly, somewhat hesitantly, the new ideas make their way: a new enthusiasm for the natural sciences, education, the ideas of the English economists, and a little political liberalism. The colonies begin to be touched by these influences. Particularly the River Plate colonies enjoy a remarkable economic prosperity, with the growth of the cattle industry. A new economically well-to-do group appears on the scene, especially during the boom created by the free-trade legislation of Charles III (1778). This class demands a position in the colony commensurate with its economic status. Their

claim finds a ready-made expression in French and English liberal ideas (Locke, Montesquieu, Voltaire, etc.) which they first meet in a moderate Spanish version (Jovellanes, Feijóo, Cabarrús, the Marquis of Campomanes), but which later they trace to their very sources. They are weapons against Spanish cultural, political and economic monopoly. "The *criollo bourgeoisie* became earnest liberals, because liberalism — even under the restrictions put upon the doctrine in Spain — offered a solution to the most immediate problems and a body of doctrine for those remote aspirations which moved the most daring spirits." ¹

All Latin American politics are caught in the grip of these two Spanish heritages. It is not, as has sometimes been said, a merely ideological question : obscurantism *versus* enlightenment ; nor a political one : totalitarianism *versus* democracy. Socio-racial (the rise of the *criollos*) and economic (the rise of the cattle-industry people, the *hacendados*) factors come into play, and all this gives the fight for emancipation its peculiar character in our country. The emancipation movement which makes its outward appearance in the River Plate area towards 1810, gathers around this new social and economic group ; it is a city movement, which interests the cultured and economically well-to-do *criollos*. The rural population of the rest of the country does not participate at the beginning. When it is called to enter, the orientation has already been given by the European-minded group in Buenos Aires. This is the origin of the deep and tragic conflict between Buenos Aires and the "interior" (the rest of the country), between the "doctrinal democracy" of the cultured minority in Buenos Aires and the "inorganic democracy" of the *caudillos* (Romero) ². The conflict ends with

¹ *La época política en Argentina*, Fondo de Cultura Económica, México, 1946, p. 53. By the way, the fact that these ideas entered Argentina in the attenuated Spanish version, and not coupled with French religious scepticism, explains why political and economic liberalism has been linked in our country with religious conservatism.

² *Caudillo* is the classical name for irregular military leaders, who would carry with them an entire province or more, and had an enormous prestige among the rural population. Some of them were not as ignorant and ruthless as current history (written by their enemies, particularly Sarmiento in our country) has portrayed them.

a conciliation after the violent struggles of the period of anarchy. But it is an apparent rather than a real conciliation. The government is in the hands of the liberal cultured group, devoted people possessed of a tremendous civilizing impetus, deeply concerned about the organization of the country, popular education, the establishment of railways, banks and foreign industries, the organization of justice. But the rural population, the *gaucho*, felt as ignored and oppressed as ever. The most popular *gaucho* poet, Martin Fierro, expresses the hope that some time :

“..... venga algún criollo
en esta tierra a mandar.”¹

It is not long before that generation of apostolic liberals begets a new class, which retains its dominant position, but also brings to reality what was already potentially present : an aristocratic conservative oligarchy which will defend its class interests. It is the cattle oligarchy which wields so weighty an influence in our political history.

History hurries on in America. At least four different periods succeed and overlap in the hundred years between the epoch of national organization (the sanction of the National Constitution, 1853) and the present. The generation following that of the liberal fathers of national organization becomes the oligarchy monopolizing the wealth of the country ; they live in the European style, dream about Paris, and spend there the millions produced by the cattle industry. A new middle class comes into being with the current of immigration (in fifty years the population increases from six to eighteen millions). This middle class breaks into the political scene with the *Partido radical* (something similar to the Democrats in the United States), which introduces some social reforms (1916 on), but very soon is displaced, partly due to its political blunders, but mainly to the conservative oligarchic reaction which carries out successfully a military *coup* in 1930. Finally another mili-

¹ “... a *criollo* will come to govern this land.” This verse was taken by the Peronists as a kind of prophecy of their Messiah. That the Peronist regime meant a solution of the rural social problem is, nevertheless, much to be doubted.

tary revolution¹ gives rise in 1943 to the phenomenon called *Peronismo*, which unites a genuine awakening of the proletarian classes, the remnants of the old personalist *caudillismo*, and a new form of fascism.

The compression of the historical process

The main characteristic of this process which we have outlined is the tremendous compression of historical developments. Transformations, which in other continents have taken centuries, have been compressed in ours into scarcely a century and a half, with some serious consequences.

When England was living through the industrial revolution (middle of the eighteenth century), our countries were in the middle of feudalism (which has survived in quite a crude form in some countries down to the very present). As Marx and Engels were writing the *Communist Manifesto*, our lands did not have even the embryo of that industrial proletariat whose problems and aspirations communist pronouncements embody. European fascism dawns upon us when we are yet in the pangs of military *caudillismo*, so that it is almost impossible to distinguish in our late revolutions between the old military *coup* and the new ideologies. Our historical process always lags behind, and is always speeded up from outside. It is not a process of ripening. It has been constantly pressed, forced to move ahead, like a child compelled to share with adults their problems and preoccupations.

This compression of history is at the root of certain very complex problems :

a) Political democracy, for instance, has been forced upon us, when we did not yet have the middle class where it finds its support. As a consequence, our democracy has not yet been able to find its solid core, and has been the tool of intellectually progressive, but economically and socially conservative,

¹ It is very difficult to find a name for our military *coups* and revolutions, which are a phenomenon peculiar to Latin American life. The colourful names of *cuartelazo* (a *coup* arising from a military barrack) or *coronelazo* (a *coup* by an army officer) cannot be substituted.

groups. Thus, we have had political liberalism hand in hand with the economic conservatism of landowners and *hacendados*, without any other alternative except anarchy and *caudillismo*. The situation was even complicated by the fact that the new political ideas came from countries with imperialistic interests in our continent (England and the United States), and were supported at home by the people who profited by this imperialism (the aforementioned landowners and *hacendados*). Political democracy and social justice thus become widely different and even antagonistic forces.

b) Social revolution breaks in when we have not yet reached political stability. In countries with a long settled political tradition, revolutionary movements can enter the political arena without upsetting the whole political structure; they come into the play of the existing institutions and succeed in making transformations within the frame of the country's political life. It is not so in our countries. The political organization is still fragile, government institutions have not yet been stabilized, they have not yet a tradition to lean on, and the weight and drive of the new social movements break the whole political structure to pieces. Add to this that industrial development is recent and in some cases only beginning (so that rural and city proletariat do not have the same interests, and their dissidence creates new frictions), that the population has not reached a necessary degree of homogeneity, and it will be easy to see why our social movements frequently take on a character which deceives the onlooker (if not the participants themselves). It is very easy to identify as a political organizational problem what is in fact a social-economic one.

c) The rapid pace of that process prevents the maturing of genuine political vocations. The intelligentsia, outside the revolutionary movement, have remained divorced from the political and social reality. Prisoners of an Europeanizing mania, they have either remained aloof from their native countries' problems, intent only on imitating European literary or philosophical fashions — or at best carrying that process forward, or they have tried to force our political reality into the strait-jacket of European concepts and categories. And when the

reality did not yield to their blind attempts, they have stigmatized our masses as wild and primitive, fit only to be driven by whips. This divorce between the intellectuals and any national reality has left government in the hands of opportunists lacking technical qualifications.

d) Among other factors that have entered the situation is military *caudillismo*. In a changing and bewildering scene, the army has maintained a certain continuity. This has enabled it to become the permanent arbiter (and an arbitrary enough one!) in political decisions. Tied in by its interests with the most reactionary groups, it has usually been a guarantee of the dominance of these groups.

e) Economic imperialism — predominantly, but not exclusively, English or American — has retarded social and economic evolution. Political struggles have frequently mirrored the conflicts of foreign interests. These, on the other hand, sometimes unwittingly, have stimulated monoproduction and monoculture to further their interests. In this way, they have been able, on the one hand, to control the political life of a country (because a country is often faced with an international monopoly which has a stranglehold on the national economy — witness Bolivia and the tin situation!), and, on the other hand, to prevent the growth of equilibrium in the economic life of the country, which has had to depend completely upon the fluctuation on the world market of a single product.

Summary

All these factors have shaped a political situation characterized *grosso modo* by:

a) Technical inability of political forces. With the exception of some leftist groups (mainly socialist), politics has been conducted without any regard to a rational plan arising from an analysis of the situation and informed by a mastery of the political and social sciences.

b) Personal dishonesty in politics is not a Latin American invention, but it has reached in our continent a high degree of specialization. *Todos los politicos son ladrones* (all politicians are

thieves) is an unchallenged axiom for most Latin American voters. Politics is thought of by the masses as a means of getting rich quick.

c) Discontinuity. A change in political orientation, frequently introduced by a military *coup*, is almost always followed by an indiscriminating and absolute damnation of the past; there is an attempt to overthrow completely all that the preceding government has done, and to start again from scratch. That means habitually the removal of all administrative personnel (down to the last town-council clerk), with a resulting lack of continuity. The educational system upset by each new change, economic policy disrupted every few years by a complete re-direction — everything suffers an upheaval which immensely retards the progress of the country.

II. THE RECORD OF STUDENTS IN LATIN AMERICAN POLITICAL LIFE

The modern world has discovered youth as a social and political force. Communism and nazism have cleverly used it. Mannheim has observed that in a society intent on the conservation of values, the older people will have priority over the younger, and that exactly the opposite will happen in a dynamic society which desires radical changes. Youth (and particularly student youth) has not yet been integrated within the frame of organized society, and is therefore open to new possibilities.

This general observation is corroborated in our situation. Latin America is living through a revolutionary period. Proletarian revolution has coincided with the awakening of retarded racial groups (Indians) and rural proletariat. This revolutionary impetus has been increased by the reaction (world-wide reaction, in fact) against foreign imperialisms, and the ardent desire of young nations to take their place in the world community as free nations and not as mere satellites in the orbit of the preponderant American power. All these goals have a tremendous

appeal to students, and have created an effervescence which found one manifestation in the university reform movement around 1918. This forced student participation in the university educational management, breaking a long tradition of arbitrariness and social discrimination in the university.

But this political fervour has been somewhat divorced from reality. One could easily find among students a vague intellectual socialism, a great enthusiasm for social justice, freedom, national sovereignty, etc., together with a tremendous ignorance about the real social problems, and a painful lack of realism regarding the means of political action. Two remarks should qualify the preceding statement: (a) Exception has to be made for communist and fascist groups with a rigid indoctrination and careful direction along the lines of action of the party. (b) The situation is rapidly changing in this regard, and today one finds university students with a much more realistic approach to politics.

III. STUDENT CHRISTIAN WITNESS IN POLITICS IN LATIN AMERICA

What contribution can a Christian student make in this situation? Or rather, what is his political responsibility as a Christian student? Political problems never admit ready-made solutions. Nor is this the place for a discussion on the theory of political action. I shall therefore confine myself to pointing out some general considerations which, in my opinion, a Christian student should take into account in making his decision about political action in Latin America.

a) The first and most important *political responsibility* of a student is *to study*. A good number of our most acute problems in Latin America are of a technical nature. They cannot be solved by the cleverest, most intelligent or even most moral of politics. They can only be solved technically. The emancipation of our countries from economic colonialism is, for instance, in most cases, a question of diversifying the economy. To that

end, new sources of production have to be found, problems of transportation solved, and the creation of subsidiary industries promoted. Only the technician can tackle these problems. The first *political* need of our countries is a generation of able professional researchers and technicians (engineers, economists, agricultural experts). The best political action is wrecked by a lack of competent technicians.

b) It is necessary that genuine *political vocations* be awakened in Christian students. The best goodwill in the world does not make an able statesman out of a doctor, a lawyer or an army man. Political action in our age requires much specialized knowledge. Such knowledge has been conspicuously absent from our politics. The number of students enrolling in social and political science courses is very small. We have to admit that these are sacrificial vocations in our countries, but they are also indispensable, if a new day is to dawn in Latin American political life. More than one revolutionary attempt has floundered because of the inability of the persons of goodwill who launched it. Irrational plans of industrialization have disrupted rural production. The nationalization of public services or national resources has become a mortgage on the public treasury because of administrative ineffectiveness. Precisely because it is both a sacrificial and an indispensable vocation, the call to political science is, in Latin America, a *specific Christian vocation*.

c) It is necessary to avoid the *danger* of "*political docetism*", that heresy which consists in putting all our efforts into the creation of institutional democracy, without regard for the concrete social reality. I call it docetism because institutional democracy without social democracy is a shadow without reality, a disembodied spirit, a phantom. It is the denial of the Incarnation.

Under the influence of the rationalistic liberalism which contributed to our political emancipation, and in line with the thought of certain founding fathers of our nation, university students run the risk of falling prey to this heresy. It is the dream of formal democracy, where duly controlled elections are periodically held, where freedom of press and expression remain

unchallenged, and unrestricted play is offered to political parties.

Of course, all these freedoms are often only sham freedoms. There is freedom of expression for those classes and interests which can control the means of communication. Press and radio, political parties, and all means of propaganda are in the hands of a small number of people who usually represent both the most reactionary social groups and foreign interests. They are able to create in the country, and in the world news market, the climate of opinion congenial to their interests.

Christian students, at least, should recognize this idol of formal democracy for what it is. Those who have been steeped in the biblical perspective will not be led astray by this substitution of apparent freedom for justice. It is enough to shout "freedom of the press", "free elections" and "democracy" to send the impressionable students enthusiastically yelling through the streets. The Christian student, at least, should be able to analyze calmly these hallowed slogans. What are the real interests back of them? Is it real freedom that is wanted? Experience has taught us that justice without freedom is not lasting justice. But it has also taught us that freedom without justice is dead.

d) Coupled with the preceding is the demand for *political realism*. Our politics have been imbued with a blind doctrinaire attitude, to which only purely personalist or opportunist politics have been opposed. The effort to pigeon-hole the Latin American situation in categories brought in from outside, either from right or from left, has ruined many an otherwise serious attempt to systematize our political life. Every concrete political situation is unique and unrepeatable, and cannot be reduced to a simple formula. But ours is extraordinarily so. The modern world does not know any other situation where the same factors that have produced ours have come into play. Neither the experience of Asia, with its still living millenary tradition and its demographic conditions, nor that of Europe, with two centuries of scientific rationalism, nor that of African nations, mostly devoid of European patterns, can compare with our experience and present situation. Each problem has

to be faced as it comes up, and has to be given consideration within the framework of *our* situation, not judged by the standards of a doctrinal position elaborated under totally different circumstances. The problem of the nationalization of resources and foreign capital, for instance, cannot be solved on the basis of a nationalist or liberal free enterprise ideology ; it can only be solved in the light of local circumstances. The question must not be : what is (theoretically) better ? but rather, what is (concretely) more useful ? ¹

e) Last, but not least, there is the need for *personal decency* in politics. It is not just a question of the common decency and honesty which are a part of the Christian witness anywhere. Here, in the Latin American political arena, this requirement has a particular significance. Where irresponsibility, dishonesty, theft are almost the norm of political behaviour, the firm honesty and common decency of the Christian politician is an affirmation of the will to do things as they should be done, to take politics seriously as a vocation, not to play politics as a game, but to devote to it an intelligent effort ; it is a sign of the engagement of the Christian in politics, the sign of the vindication of political life as a serious human possibility.

Revolution is much spoken of in Latin America. What impresses the onlooker, though, is not so much the revolutionary momentum as revolutionary impotence. The Latin American political scene is a welter of abortive revolutions. We are always called to witness the birth of a new order, but all we see is a rehashing of the old order. Hopes are preached, and they prove to be only utopias. The Christian, who knows the

¹ The elimination of the cattle and landowning aristocracy in favor of the rural proletariat, for instance, may seem very commendable from a theoretical social justice point of view, but in a given situation it could be a disastrous economic measure, which could throw the country into chaos. To follow that line in loyalty to a "social reform" program would be bad Christian politics. We are not attempting an exaltation of "machievellianism" or anything of the sort. We are only pleading for the necessary realism. Political science is the science of good government, and good government is that which best fulfils the goals for which a country exists. In the achievement of these goals, the distinction between morally good and bad means cannot be ignored, but it cannot be drawn regardless of the efficacy of such means. Means which do not lead to the achievement of the end in view are morally bad, even though they may follow every imaginable moral principle.

only true revolution, the irruption of the new order into the old, the one hope which has substance, can and must be the witness to that revolution also in the political life of his country. Knowing that all novelty in this world is only partially new, that human hopes are always penultimate, that revolutions in our world are never totally revolutionary, he knows, nevertheless, that there is, because of the reality of redemption, a measure of novelty, of hope and of transformation which can be realized even in the midst of our old *aeon*. His political conduct should be that of a responsible, realistic, stubborn witness, in this arena also, of the new hope which flooded into our world at the Resurrection and at Pentecost.

Evangelism and Ecumenism in Latin America

EMILIO CASTRO

Latin America is a tremendous geographical expanse that includes all the republics to the south of the United States, passing through the equator and reaching to the frigid regions of the South Pole. These various republics, which often maintain deep rivalries among themselves, can be considered as a group and their problems studied together, in view of their common history and the bonds of language and religion.

From their discovery, these lands were colonies of the powerful Iberians — the Spanish and Portuguese. In spite of the language differences between the Spanish and the Portuguese, today's traveller who speaks either of these can tour all the Latin American countries without language difficulties.

The importance of the role of religion in the formation of this Latin American unity should be emphasized. Spain and Portugal infused into their colonies inquisitorial Catholicism, and during the entire period of their dominion all other religious thought was officially prohibited. It was maintained that a strict union between church and state would serve the interests of one as much as the other.

The independence won by these republics in the first half of the nineteenth century did not signify at first any major change in the religious situation. The Catholic Church continued to maintain with the various independent states the same relations it had had with the colonial powers. Only recently, at the end of the nineteenth, and in our present century, have liberal currents succeeded in crossing the Latin American frontiers and in summoning sufficient strength to bring about in some countries the separation of church and state, and freedom of worship. In general, we can say that liberty of worship exists in Latin America today, with rather serious restrictions in Colombia, and to a lesser degree in Venezuela and Peru.

It is against this historical background that we must trace the problems of evangelism and ecumenism, and that we must consider the activities of the Student Christian Movement in these lands.

Catholic evangelism

Formerly the problem of evangelism did not exist for Latin American Catholicism. It maintained the illusion that all the inhabitants of these countries were Catholic, and evangelism therefore was considered quite unnecessary. Moreover, a little missionary work among the primitive inhabitants of the American jungles, not yet won for civilization, could be pointed out. But evangelization in the sense of announcing the Gospel with a "first-time" freshness that elicits a radical change in man's relation with God was totally unknown.

Nevertheless, in some countries, especially Uruguay, Argentina and Chile, it is possible to detect the gradual appearance of environmental factors which reveal the illusion of confusing the number of inhabitants with the number of Catholics, and which are making evident to the Catholic Church the necessity of embarking on activities aimed at evangelization and recovery of its members.

The positivistic preaching that has left profound impressions in countries such as Uruguay, the presence of a powerful Marxism among the working masses, the impact of modern secularism and the presence of Protestantism, oblige the Catholic Church to think and act in an evangelistic way, although as yet this is on a small scale, if the human and economic potential of the Catholic Church and the magnitude of the problem to be faced are considered. It is possible to see the spread of radio broadcasts with a popular appeal on Catholic stations, the formation of youth organizations similar to the YMCA, and even street preaching in crowded sections of the large cities.

Of course, all this is of recent origin, an innovation that can be observed only where the position of the Catholic Church is being attacked, but it should be considered as the beginning of a new approach towards these countries on the part of the Catholic Church. While Catholics continue to proclaim officially,

especially in Protestant countries, that these Latin American countries are homogeneously Catholic, they are beginning to weigh the truthfulness of this solemn affirmation and the necessity of initiating a counter-offensive.

Protestant evangelism

On the other hand, the whole history of Protestantism in Latin America could be told under the heading of evangelization. Young churches, many of them as yet in the mission stage, are possessed of a powerful evangelical zeal that in many cases has brought about the neglect of other important aspects of religious life.

The evangelistic activity of the Protestant Church can be divided into two periods more or less well defined. The first begins in the second half of the nineteenth century. Although it is possible to trace the work of pioneers before that time, it is nevertheless correct to affirm that evangelical work, resulting in the evangelization of nationals and maintaining links with international bodies, began only then. Methodists, Baptists and Presbyterians were the first to arrive.

Two characteristics mark this first period. In the first place, there was the anti-clerical fight. It is not for us now to judge the methods or behaviour of the first Protestants in Latin America, for we are not in the same historical situation. They came into a culture that was totally acquiescent to clericalism and that did not tolerate any introduction of new ideas. Any attempt to present a non-Catholic form of the Christian faith immediately provoked the opposition of the Catholic Church, and discussion and debate were automatically stifled. Let us add that in this epoch liberal and masonic elements were trying to combat the cultural dominion of the church, and they saw in the advances of Protestantism an allied effort in this struggle, and at the same time a hope of raising the social and cultural level of the people.

The second characteristic of this period was the emphasis on education through the schools as a method of evangelization. Everywhere Protestant missionaries or the first national pastors settled, there immediately arose a school. In many cases the

school antedated the church, as the only Protestant work permitted by the authorities was educational and not ecclesiastical. The schools, of which several of notable educational tradition remain, fulfilled a double mission, that of evangelizing their students directly and that of erasing prejudices against Protestant work.

In this first stage we can say that a twofold result was produced: while the schools won the sympathy and goodwill of the leading class, the rising churches won followers especially among people of humble social and cultural conditions. All generalizations have their limits, and in some capitals, especially Montevideo, from the first the Methodist Church appealed to an element which was outstanding intellectually in the life of the community. At any rate, although the first converts were of humble origin, the moral virtues and eagerness for knowledge that characterize Latin American Protestantism enabled the descendants of the first Protestants rapidly to attain to positions of importance in social and cultural life, thus empowering them to undertake with great chances of success evangelistic work among people of Latin American culture.

Likewise, this first period saw the emergence of some strictly national groups, for example, the Pentecostalists in Chile, notable for their rapid growth among the lowest classes of society, where their work of total redemption cannot be denied.

It should also be emphasized that the work of evangelization among the Indians of the Andean Altiplano had already begun in this first period. Work within this ancient Inca culture was not limited to preaching, but was an integral work of redemption of the individual, at the centre of which was the evangelical message.

Doubt has been expressed in the Christian world as to whether these churches had the right during this first period to carry out evangelization in areas already known as Christian by virtue of being claimed by the Catholic Church. As a result of this feeling, Latin American delegates were not permitted to attend the ecumenical and missionary conference at Edinburgh in 1910. More recently, at the conference in Jerusalem, Latin American representatives were admitted; by that time the existence in Latin America of large masses of the population

without any connection with the church was recognized. This recognition has continued "in *crescendo*" to the point where today it has culminated in the election of a Latin American bishop to one of the presidencies of the World Council of Churches.

The second period of evangelization is characterized by the entrance on the Latin American scene of a large number of denominational groups of North American origin, and by a considerable strengthening of the missionary work of the already existing groups. Two factors have doubtless produced in our time a renewed interest in Latin America: first, the closing to missionary activity of communist lands of Asia, which released enormous reserves of missionary energy from the North American churches; and second, a greater understanding of the social, political, economic and religious situation of the two Americas.

Thus we have at present a real Protestant invasion. For example, in Bolivia, where for many years a small group of five or six denominations worked, there are now thirty-two distinct Protestant groups.

In general the Protestant panorama is one of rapid growth. Outstanding in this respect are Brazil, Chile and Mexico. Bolivia now appears to be a country of promise, in which rapid advances are taking place, while Uruguay, because of its self-sufficient liberalism, is the most difficult territory. It is hard to know exactly how far the open opposition of the Catholic Church has been able to check the advances of Protestantism, for example, in Colombia, but we must realize that it constitutes an effective check in those areas where Protestant work is entirely prohibited, due to the fact that extensive regions are considered as mission zones for Catholicism.

Ecumenical activities

The presence of numerous Protestant churches and of the Catholic Church raises the problem of ecumenism on two levels: one, the realization of an ecumenical spirit among the Protestant churches themselves, and, two, the attitude of these churches toward the Catholic Church and *vice versa*.

The most obvious form of ecumenical contact is that of cooperation in special activities such as evangelization campaigns in public places, the publication of declarations on transgressions against freedom of worship, etc. This cooperation enables effective work to be done, makes possible personal contacts among leaders, without compromising the denominations, and thus maintains a unity that could not stand the test of confrontation of doctrines.

In several countries more concrete steps have been taken towards the manifestation of the ecumenical ideal, in the form of associations or federations of churches which act together, especially in cases involving encounters with the governments, and also in encouraging activities that bring about greater understanding and collaboration among the churches. In no case, however, have these federations succeeded in including all the Protestant groups at work in a given country.

In some places there have been discussions looking towards a true union, a merger of two or more churches; and plans are being made in Rio de la Plata for a union among the Methodists, Waldensians and Disciples of Christ. The big problem is that of relationships with the mother churches. But the rate of growth in numbers and in experience of the Latin American churches would seem to indicate that the consummation of such unions is inevitable.

International ecumenical organizations

The time has come to ask ourselves about the connection of these regional movements of ecumenical cooperation with the World Council of Churches. Since they are not churches, but federations of churches, they cannot be formal members of the Council, but some maintain direct relations with its different departments, and work along the same lines. Nevertheless, other groups that have established some type of ecumenical cooperation in their local field (a concrete example is the United Protestant Churches of La Paz, Bolivia) feel that it impossible for them to cooperate fully or have contact with the World Council, because of the international connections of their member churches. If the parent churches in the United

States or England cooperate with the Council, this cooperation can also be obtained here on the mission field. Otherwise, the only hope lies in the growth and local support of these churches, which will bring independence of judgment; but this will take time.

This same lack of independence creates problems for the WSCF in Latin America. Pastors and lay leaders of the churches cannot fail to recognize the need for evangelistic work within the university. But many of them fear to recommend to their students that they affiliate with a group that has international connections, and with which their mother churches have no relations, while many others apply the term "modernist" to the Federation, and thus exclude all possibility of cooperation.

In general, it can be said that the churches belonging to the great historical traditions of Protestantism maintain an ecumenical spirit in their mutual relations and in their relations with international ecumenical organizations.

Ecumenism and Catholicism

In all parts of the world, the trial by fire of ecumenism for Protestant churches is their relation with the Catholic Church, but this is particularly so in those areas where it claims to have sole dominion in the religious sphere and considers the Protestant churches as intruders. We must recall the bloody persecutions suffered by Protestants in some countries, even to this day, to understand the urgency of the situation in this part of the world.

It is not possible to speak of ecumenism with regard to the attitude of the Catholic Church toward the Evangelical churches, since it represents itself unreservedly as the only Christian Church. Ecumenism in the sense of a relationship among churches is, with respect to the Catholic Church, completely unknown in Latin America. What, then, of ecumenism as a matter of attitude rather than of relationship or cooperation?

In general it can be said that the attitude of the Catholic Church has been one of annoyance and resentment because of the presence of the Protestant churches, though as these churches have grown, a number of priests have achieved a

more positive attitude. On the Evangelical side, attitudes vary as greatly as the groups composing it. Clearly, the very presence of these churches disproves the Catholic contention that these lands are already Christian and do not need any missionary work. Other articles in this number of *The Student World* analyze the situation of the Catholic Church, so no further comment is needed here. From the point of view of the Protestant, the field for work includes the great masses of indigenous people living in the crassest superstition, the university students who have rejected the intellectual domination of Catholicism, the religiously disaffected mass of citizens with only a veneer of piety, etc. Within Protestant circles, three typical attitudes can be found :

1. The fundamentalist groups in general do not hesitate to deny openly the Christianity of the Catholic Church. They lump it together with pagan superstitions, and believe it to be their duty to convert the largest number of Catholics possible to the Protestant faith.

2. Then there are those who ignore the existence of the Catholic Church. They feel there is no reason to be preoccupied in combatting the errors of that church, but that they should preach in a positive way to all who wish to listen to Christian truths as we understand them, without considering whether or not the listeners are Catholics. This attitude can be justified by the fact that large numbers of people have such a tenuous relation with the Catholic Church that they can find in it no points of reference to help them understand the evangelical message.

3. And finally, there are those who ignore the Catholic Church as such, but recognize the presence of Christians within it. Thus the theological problem of the "marks" of the Church is avoided, and the conscience of the individual Catholic who is recognized as being sincere in his profession of faith can be respected. This attitude derives from a realism that feels all fruitful contact with this church is impossible, and that is often accompanied by the secret hope of an internal reform

in the Latin American Catholic Church. Those who face the spiritual problem of Latin America as a whole, and do not approach it from a mere confessional point of view, conclude that hope for an effective Christianization of these lands should not be based upon a mass conversion to Protestantism, but should lie in a spiritual reform that would do justice to the Christian elements in the Catholic Church. But it is also understood that at present the only way to help effect this reform is to strengthen the Evangelical churches in such a way that they constitute a real threat to the Catholic Church, so that it will shake off its lethargy and come to grips with its true responsibility for the Christianization of the masses.

Thus the general attitude of Protestants towards Catholicism in Latin America favours firm evangelism before ecumenism. Naturally, they are fully aware of the dangers of proselytism. But they feel that it is better to run this risk than to fall into complacency that would impede the free presentation of the Christian message to these multitudes.

The Latin American Student Christian Movement

The Student Christian Movement, or MEC as it is called in South America, has as its concern the work of evangelization in the university field. Almost all the MECs in Latin America originated among Protestant elements. But soon they began to discover that many of their member had no relation whatever to any Christian church. Some were nominal Catholics, full of criticism of their own church; others were students who considered themselves Christians, but who could not, or would not, adapt themselves to the life of a local congregation. As exceptional cases, we also have some Catholic students who wish to remain faithful to their church and still participate in the MEC, and who thus often run into difficulties with Roman Catholic priests.

As a result of its composition, the MEC experiences acutely within it the problems of both evangelism and ecumenism. In the effort to evangelize we are brought face to face with ecumenism, for no evangelization is complete which does not succeed in integrating the convert into the life of a group.

This problem was fully debated in the conference of Cochabamba¹. It will suffice here to indicate the special role we feel our MECs can fulfil in coping with the problem of ecumenism.

1. They can provide a meeting place, not only for students of different religious denominations, but also for leaders of these denominations. It should be a neutral place, where, without ecclesiastical compromise, they can become acquainted, erase prejudices, and understand better the true proportions of their differences when compared to their unity in Christ.

2. They should establish centres of study of the problem of ecumenism and of the differences between churches. An opportunity to know the various churches in the locality should be given to those students who have the problem of relating themselves to a church.

3. The MECs should make every effort to work in cooperation with the churches, and volunteer to carry this united witness into the heart of the university.

4. But fundamentally, the MEC should seek to create among its members a spirit of respect for religious convictions held by others, and for the sincerity of those in good standing in religious bodies other than their own.

The MEC is inevitably an organization that facilitates conversions from one Christian faith to another. It will make a great contribution to the solution of the ecumenical problem if it helps the convert to embrace this new faith without any spirit of superiority or contempt towards the church to which he formerly belonged, and if those who continue in the first church honestly accept his sincerity in believing he has found a more satisfying form of the Christian faith.

In evangelization the MECs must work alongside the churches, but in ecumenism they are called to be the leaders of a new spirit of Christian unity, a spirit which is urgently needed in Latin America.

¹ See on p. 67 the report of the ecumenical commission of this conference for a formulation of the thinking of Latin American MECs.

Ethical Problems of Latin American Students

RAIMUNDO VALENZUELA

The editor has asked for an article concerning the problems of personal morality of Latin American students. Since a large proportion of the students related to the Student Christian Movement come from Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist, and other Evangelical Christian groups, this article will focus on the ethical problems of Evangelical students. Indeed it is the Evangelical student, raised in a rather narrow, pious, ethical atmosphere, who feels most keenly the problems of personal morality. For Latin American students in general, such problems virtually do not exist — the only problem is to avoid the obvious excesses, to keep indulgence within the bounds of discretion. This, of course, would not be true of the devout Roman Catholic students, but these constitute a small minority. The large number of Latin American students are either nominal Catholics or avowed free thinkers, by which they mean they have no religion.

It is necessary to understand the laxity of ethical norms to comprehend the conflicts which the student with exacting ethical standards has to face. Dr. John A. Mackay, one of the keenest students of the Latin American scene, has spoken of the "ethical naturalism" which prevails in these lands. We must not forget that in all men there is a natural tendency to crass hedonism, which is only overcome by a strong moral and spiritual tradition. Latin America has lacked such a tradition. Writes Dr. Mackay: "The absence of external moral standards and sanctions, whether in tradition or in current life, and the still more tragic absence of a spiritual absolute in thought, have earned for Latin America the titles of the *continente a-moral* and the *continente a-metafisico*, that is, the continent that is lacking in both a moral sense and a spiritual principle." This condition, of course, speaks of the failure of Roman Catholicism, the dominant religion in Latin America.

It is not within the scope of this study to analyze the reasons for this failure ; we merely call attention to it.

The conflict between a puritanical ethic, inculcated in home and church, and the ethical naturalism in the prevailing culture makes the problem of practical conduct a peculiarly difficult one for the Evangelical student. If he rejects the standards in which he has been raised and accepts the standards, or lack of standards, of his fellow students, he is thrust into conflict with his home and his church. If, on the other hand, he remains faithful to his traditional standards, he exposes himself to ridicule as a puritan, an ascetic, a queer one. For the out-of-town student who is forced to live in boarding house, or university residence hall (a new development ; only recently have Latin American universities begun to take responsibility for the housing conditions of students) where he is frequently the only Evangelical Christian, the conflict is even more acute. It is not strange that in such circumstances many students fail to carry the conflict, and settle the matter by giving up the standards of the church of their childhood. This is frequently a cause for heartbreak for their devout parents, themselves often of humble background, who wonder if they do right in making such great sacrifices for their children's education, as they watch their ethical and spiritual decay.

The following are some of the main points of conflict between the home-church ethic of the Evangelical student and the standards of the typical Latin American student.

The use of tobacco and alcoholic beverages

Whether it should be so or not, one of the first points of conflict which the Evangelical student faces as he enters the university is in the matter of smoking and drinking. The no-smoking, no-drinking tradition of most of the mission-founded Evangelical churches of Latin America owes its origin to the views of the founding missionaries, for whom tobacco and alcohol were positive evils to be avoided at all costs. Unfortunately this attitude has remained in many circles as a mere legalism, without adequate education as to the valid reasons which exist for maintaining these traditions. Where

this occurs, high-spirited students, far from the restrictions of home, quickly repudiate the legalistic prohibitions. For the earnest Evangelical student, who feels himself deeply bound to his home and church and who shares in the redemptive mission of his church, however, the maintenance of these standards of abstinence will be understood as a necessity willingly accepted, and he must carry the conflict provoked by the contrast between his conduct and that of his fellow students.

To understand the why and wherefore of abstinence it must be borne in mind that a large part of the membership of the Evangelical churches, among them perhaps parents of our students, comes from those for whom the acceptance of Jesus Christ as Saviour has meant freedom from vices and enslaving habits, and a new sense of stewardship which leaves no room for self-indulgence in that which has been needless, expensive, and for them, harmful. The "Christian" need for abstinence from alcohol in such a country as Chile, for example, seems very clear to this writer. Alcoholism is Chile's major social problem — the leading cause of crime, of absenteeism from work, of the neglect of home responsibilities, of cruelty to children, etc. A high percentage of the population are alcoholics, for whom the taking of a first drink leads irresistibly to continued drinking and hopeless drunkenness. There are a number of occupational groups, such as unskilled construction workers, draymen, etc. who are notorious for drunkenness. Moderation for these alcoholics is not an option; the only freedom is to be found in total abstinence. The church which surrenders to the pressure for moderate drinking thereby forfeits the opportunity to furnish a truly redemptive experience for vast numbers who need new life in Christ. The only safety for the reborn alcoholic is in the fellowship of total abstainers. The experience of the Evangelical churches of Chile at this point is in striking parallel to that of Alcoholics Anonymous. The churches have been virtual A.A. groups for their converts. The reason for maintaining a tradition of abstinence is not a narrow legalism, but the call to Christian solidarity contained in the Pauline counsel: "Everything is indeed clean, but it is wrong for anyone to make others fall by what he eats; it is right not

to eat meat or drink wine or do anything which makes your brother stumble" (Rom. 14: 20-21).

An unfortunate aspect of this tradition of abstinence in the Evangelical churches is that when a church member departs from it, he automatically begins to withdraw from his church. Sometimes he is made to feel unwelcome in the church by pharisaic members. More often it is he himself who no longer feels at home in the church, once he has definitely turned his back on its standards. In either case, the churches have not solved the problem of imparting a sense of fellowship to both drinkers who do not intend to stop drinking, and to non-drinkers. Perhaps it is impossible to do so.

The problem of gambling

A second point of conflict in standards of personal conduct arises with regard to participation in various forms of gambling. When leading universities, such as the University of Concepcion, hospitals, orphanages, and other benevolent institutions are supported by national lotteries, and when every fund-raising effort for some worthy cause makes use of raffles and various games of chance, it is difficult to draw a hard and fast line against gambling. The various student centres themselves sponsor affairs to raise funds for student activities, and the Evangelical student may thus find himself forced to sponsor a project involving gambling. It is a rare student, however, who becomes an inveterate gambler, and this problem, though serious, may be considered of secondary importance.

The problem of sexual ethics

Far more serious are the problems which arise in the field of sexual ethics. The Evangelical male student entering university has become aware of the laxity in sexual standards among his fellow secondary school students, and has had the opportunity to learn of various sexual adventures. But living at home he has been guarded and protected by parental supervision. Unfortunately, it is doubtful if he has been given any adequate instruction in sexual matters. He knows that the Christian ethic calls for pre-marital chastity and fidelity in

marriage, but he has not been given any scientific information or any real psychological help in dealing with his own disturbing desires. Arriving in the university, he suddenly finds himself freed from all external restraints, and living in an atmosphere where it is taken for granted that anything is permissible provided that proper precautions are taken. In most Latin American countries there is a strong tradition that the women of one's own social class are to be respected, unless they are known to be free with their affections, but there are few conscientious scruples with regard to taking pleasure with girls from socially inferior ranks. Prostitution is an accepted and legal institution in virtually all Latin American countries, while the keeping of mistresses is not only widely condoned, it is more or less taken for granted.

This laxity, to be sure, is wholly contrary to the official teachings of the Roman Catholic Church, and would not be typical of truly devout Catholic students. Most students, however, as already pointed out, are only nominal Catholics or free thinkers, who feel that asceticism in sexual matters may be very well for saints or the undersexed, but quite unnecessary for real men. There is thus an equivocal attitude in which the Christian ethic is the official standard, but one which is quite generally and complacently disregarded.

Until recent years women of the higher social classes were extremely protected and were expected to remain inviolate. This condition still largely prevails in a number of countries where traditionally relations between young men and women have been subjected to extreme forms of chaperonage. With the triumph of feminism, however, the freedom enjoyed by women has greatly increased everywhere. The number of women students in the universities, where co-education is the rule, except for certain technical schools, has also greatly increased. Women students are claiming the same freedoms which men enjoy, and sexual indulgence is no longer a problem for the men students only. Still guarded by the lingering influence of tradition, stronger in some countries than in others, women are having to face directly the problem of sexual ethics.

Evangelical students, therefore, both men and women, need careful guidance and help in this field. Questions regarding

sex must be faced frankly and honestly. Too long have the Evangelical churches more or less shared in the prevailing Catholic idea that sex is evil in itself ; too long has sex information been considered taboo, and thus relegated to the realm of malicious gossip. Church and student leaders need to present the scientific facts, and the sacramental, biblical view of sex with clarity and vigour. To this end such material as was published recently in an issue of *The Student World* is extremely helpful. An excellent opportunity to discuss the Christian attitudes towards sex has been found by a number of Latin American Student Christian Movements in the annual summer student camps.

The problem of vocation

Perhaps the most important ethical issue faced by the Evangelical student in Latin America is that which relates to his sense of christian vocation. If a true Christian, the student will be entering the university in preparation for a career of service to his fellow men. Vocation for him is to be not merely the call to self-fulfilment through an occupation in which he can express his aptitudes, much less an opportunity for a lucrative career. Vocation must be an answering of God's call to service through the talents He has given. This meaning of vocation runs counter to the prevailing idea that a liberal profession, whatever service opportunities it may hold, is primarily a pathway to social standing and economic security.

Unless there is a vigorous Christian life, an active fellowship with the church, and in the student Christian group the comradeship of those who serve, it is almost inevitable that the Evangelical student will lose his sense of Christian vocation. As the years of study go on, he will become more and more interested in his career as a gateway to social success and professional standing. Mingling in close contact with students who have far greater economic resources than he does, he will become more and more aware of the financial possibilities of his chosen profession. Thus the ideal of service gradually recedes into the background of his mind. He finds that his studies make overwhelming demands on his time and energy,

and his relationship to the church becomes one of secondary importance. His closest associations become those with the students with whom he lives and studies, until he begins to feel like a stranger in his church and among fellow Evangelicals. The day comes when he no longer goes to church. And though he may achieve an excellent professional reputation and retain a vague ideal of service, he is in no vital sense different from his fellow professionals and no longer presents a Christian witness. Christian workers in Latin America have seen this story, so full of tragic meaning for the Christian cause, take place repeatedly.

This conflict between Christian vocation and self-interest is particularly acute in the case of students to whom the churches look for professional service in one of the various institutions — school, social service centre, or hospital — which they maintain. Not infrequently these students have been enabled to go on to higher educational training through the scholarship help of the church. But with the weakening of their sense of Christian vocation, they gradually become unwilling to accept the lower salary generally paid by the church or to “sacrifice” the possibilities of a secular career for the sake of service in the church.

* * *

The problems mentioned above are only the most obvious of those faced by Evangelical students in Latin America. It is only as these students receive the ablest orientation, only as they are kept in a creative relationship to the church and helped to maintain a vital Christian experience, that they can be expected to remain true to New Testament ethical standards, and to develop into truly Christian professional people. Most Evangelical churches are not equipped to give their growing group of university students an adequate ethical orientation or to minister successfully to their varied needs. The Student Christian Movement bears a serious responsibility to supplement the efforts of the churches in ministering to students, which makes its task in Latin America far more important than the numbers it reaches would suggest.

The Devotional Life of Brazilian Protestantism

RUBEM ALVES and RICHARD SHAULL

When Christians of other lands visit Brazil, they are amazed, and at times somewhat confused, by the type of devotional life which they find in the Protestant churches. They are impressed by the extraordinary vitality of the simple piety of the average Christian. Here are people for whom the experience of a personal relationship with Jesus Christ is the very centre of life, people who read their Bibles and pray daily. Churches are filled, not only on Sunday morning, but also Sunday evening and at the midweek services. Here is a dynamic faith expressing itself in an evangelistic concern which has resulted in the rapid missionary expansion of nearly all the Evangelical churches.

At the same time, the picture is somewhat confused and chaotic. No clear structure can be discerned either in private devotions or in public worship. Many of those who take their devotional life most seriously often wonder just what relevance it all has to the problems of the world in which they live. Among many ministers and laymen, a certain dissatisfaction with things as they are is now evident. We shall here attempt to analyze this problem more carefully and show how Brazilian Protestantism, and especially the Student Christian Movement, is responding to the challenge which it presents.

Vitality

When we attempt to examine more closely the reasons for the vitality of this devotional life, several factors deserve our attention :

I. It is the result, in the first place, of the pietism and revivalism brought to Brazil by the early missionaries and which has now been taken over and made an integral part of modern Brazilian Protestantism. It is very easy, much too

easy perhaps, for us to see and criticize the weakness of these movements, or make the mistake of equating this early pietism and revivalism with some of their more recent manifestations. Before we make such criticisms, we must first see the contributions of these movements. They produced the dynamic expanding Christian Church that we have today throughout Brazil. They have raised up several generations of Christians for whom the experience of salvation and of the new life in Christ has been a powerful transforming reality. And they have laid the foundation for the seriousness and concern of the younger generation which have gone far beyond the limitations of this pietism.

2. It is the product of a type of Protestantism which has given a central place to the reading and study of the Bible. One hundred years ago the Bible was practically an unknown book in Brazil. Thanks to the unceasing efforts of the Protestants, it is now widely known and read. Even the Roman Catholic Church has reacted to this emphasis by organizing a Bible Correspondence Course and sponsoring Bible Weeks throughout the country.

For several generations, the Protestants have been known in Brazil as the men of the Bible. This is literally true, for they were formerly called *Os Biblias* by non-Evangelicals. They not only carried their Bibles to church and to work, but they also read and studied them constantly in their homes and in their churches.

3. The Protestant churches in Brazil live on a missionary frontier, the existence of which is taken very seriously. This fact has a tremendous influence on the devotional life of Brazilian Protestantism. It means that the church is constantly being stimulated by the influx of large numbers of first-generation Christians, who bring with them the intensity of life and the awareness of the radical power of the Christian faith which is always so evident to the convert. The church is constantly engaged in evangelistic and mission work. The number of new people coming to the church is so large that the weekly Sunday evening service in most Brazilian churches is evangelistic in character. Laymen and pastors are constantly occupied in

opening and developing new missions. All this not only tends to maintain the devotional life of the church at a high pitch, but also creates a certain openness to change that is characteristic of a church on the move.

Problems

Despite this rather amazing vitality, all is not well with the devotional life of Brazilian Protestantism. There is a growing feeling evident among many pastors, theological students and laymen that certain serious problems have arisen which demand attention, if we hope to preserve our heritage and meet the issues facing us in the present day.

1. The first question has to do with the meaning and structure of worship. This problem is the almost inevitable result of the development of pietism and revivalism in a Roman Catholic environment. These Evangelical movements had no clear theology of worship. They were principally concerned about leading people to a decision for Jesus Christ through an intense emotional experience, and the church service aimed to achieve that goal. At the same time, the reaction of many converts against the sterility of Roman Catholicism often led them unconsciously to reject all liturgical and devotional practices found there. Today we are reaping the harvest of all this. We have no clear understanding of what should happen in a worship service, nor any definite idea of how such a service should be structured to express what takes place in human encounter with God. For many, a service whose primary aim is to lead those who take part in it to a certain emotional experience, can hardly offer a satisfactory type of public worship. As a result, the sermon tends to become the centre of worship, and often takes up forty to fifty minutes of the service.

The same sort of problem is evident in the devotional life of the individual Christian. Here too he has been led to feel that the criterion of his devotional life is to be found in the intensity of his emotional experience. And as very often the more balanced believer is the one who does not pass through such an experience, it is precisely such people who are most

disturbed by the state of their devotional life. Without another basis on which to understand their spiritual life, many are disoriented.

2. A second question concerns Bible study, both for the individual and for the Christian community. Many, especially of the younger generation, do not become enthusiastic when they are simply told to read a certain number of chapters each day. And when they go to church and Sunday school and discover that Bible study means listening to someone talk about a certain chapter, often using it as a point of departure for a homily, they tend to lose interest in the Bible and study it very little. This is certainly not the experience of all, yet it is true of a good number, often among the more concerned of the younger generation.

3. One of the most serious weaknesses of our pietist heritage is its inability to show the relevance of the believer's experience of Jesus Christ to the problems which he faces in his life in the world. We are living in a situation in Brazil today in which the problems of the world are very near to us and cannot escape our attention. But if we cannot relate them to our faith, we tend to feel that Christianity is quite irrelevant. Nothing could be more disastrous for our devotional life or contribute so much to the tragic division we often see in the church between those who pray and concern themselves with their soul's salvation, and those who act in the world without the sustaining strength of vital devotional life and worship.

4. Many are beginning to become aware of the gradual tendency of the church to become more and more an ecclesiastical institution in which the layman plays an essentially passive role. In the early days of the life of the Brazilian church, the congregation was a small community in which nearly everyone had a responsibility. There were few trained pastors, the group was small, and many laymen were involved in the work of the local congregation and in evangelistic activities. This is still true on the missionary frontiers. But as the church has grown, the situation has changed. The local congregation has a trained minister and a small group of capable laymen who direct most of its activities. The great majority, however,

find little opportunity to assume responsibility or even to participate actively in the life of the congregation. They merely attend services and meetings, in which they listen most of the time. This creates a spiritual state which cannot be remedied, as is often attempted, by holding a series of revival meetings once or twice a year.

The search for answers

This situation has given rise to several efforts towards the renovation of the devotional life of the church. One of these comes from the newer revivalistic movements and sects which are flooding in from the United States or arising spontaneously in Brazil. These groups possess tremendous spiritual vitality and missionary zeal, and place great emphasis on emotion and consecration. In some instances, they offer a temporary satisfaction to those whose devotional life has become meaningless. The believer finds himself stirred and feels a new concern for his spiritual development. He participates actively in worship and is challenged to do personal evangelistic work. As a result, many who had settled down complacently in the church are moved to renewed dedication, and find meaning both in the services of the church and in private prayer and Bible study.

But very often this enthusiasm tends to decline rather rapidly, for no real answer has been provided to the fundamental problems we have mentioned above. When the first emotional stirring has declined, both public worship and private devotions still remain without structure or meaning. No answer has been given to the question of relevance ; the structure of church life has not been changed to give the laymen a permanent place of responsibility, and the excessive emphasis on the subjective element in the devotional life raises serious psychological and spiritual problems for many of the more sensitive souls. On the other hand, we find several small groups that are attempting to emphasize the aesthetics of worship. Special attention is given to liturgy, lighting, music and art. These elements enter not primarily as servants of the Word, but rather as tools to be used to provide a satisfying aesthetic experience. For some of the better educated who are dissatisfied

with the *status quo*, this makes a certain appeal, though in the end it is too lacking in vitality to accomplish much.

There is a third effort at renovation which is just beginning, but which may have more far-reaching consequences, as it is attempting to grapple seriously with fundamental problems in the development of our devotional life. It is perhaps no mere coincidence that some of the leadership at this point has come from the Student Christian Movement, and that our student conferences have provided an opportunity for instruction and experience in a different type of devotional life.

1. These groups are seriously concerned with the meaning and structure of Christian worship. They have given central attention to the theological basis of worship as the expression of what takes place when God enters into living encounter with man and with the congregation through the Word and the Sacraments. They are also restudying the liturgical traditions of their churches, and are seriously preoccupied with the need to secure the greatest possible participation of all in the worship service. The Student Movement has given a great deal of attention to this concern in its retreats and conferences, and is now engaged in an effort to discover more adequate patterns of worship for churches in industrial areas. In the last Presbyterian Youth Congress a young seminary student, who had been most active in this field, led a workshop on worship which brought not only youth leaders but also some pastors to a new understanding of its meaning.

The same thing is taking place in the area of individual devotional life. One of the primary questions now being studied in student and youth groups is that of the nature of the spiritual life and how it may find expression. As a result of the problem which arose for some young people after the revivalistic services of visiting evangelists, many pastors and lay leaders are showing a new willingness to study such problems.

2. Bible study is becoming a living issue in many student and youth groups as a result of the adoption of group Bible study. Susanne de Diétrich's *Rediscovery of the Bible* has been translated and well received. Group Bible study is being used not only in many student and youth groups but also in some

churches. Through it many have rediscovered the power of the Bible's message.

3. It may be, however, that the most significant development in the quest for new ways of expressing the devotional life is the discussion now going on about the nature of the Church as a witnessing community. This too began in the Student Christian Movement, as its leaders tried to discover how student groups in the universities might become responsible Christian communities. It led to serious theological study of the doctrine of the Church and of witness, and resulted in the development in the higher schools of small nuclei of Evangelical students who are becoming more and more aware of their mission in the university. This has provided a new context for the devotional life.

As the discussions have continued, they have led to a certain ferment which is now spreading beyond student circles. A booklet of studies on witness has been widely circulated and discussed. We cannot foresee the consequences of all this, but it is now evident that a good number of students and young people have discovered a new way of facing the question of devotional life, and are also being led to more meaningful and relevant worship and action in the church and in their student organizations.

Is Latin America Roman Catholic ?

IVÁN GUZMÁN

Not long ago, the attention of Latin Americans was centred on the old church-versus-state conflict. This was due to the active entrance into politics in Argentina of the Roman Catholic Church, which presented its demands on the basis of its statement that "the large majority of Argentinian people is Roman Catholic". The assumption that nearly all Latin Americans are Roman Catholic is quite common, and many people therefore conclude that this continent is also Christian.

It is probably somewhat risky to question this Roman Catholic assumption, especially if there is the possibility that our intentions may be misunderstood. The Roman Catholic Church considers those it has baptized as *de facto* members. From this viewpoint, it cannot be denied that most people in Latin America are "Christians". However, an analysis of the Christianity of our Roman Catholic countries will be interesting and valuable, since illusions in this regard are extremely harmful for both the Roman Catholic Church itself and the Latin Americans who supposedly are part of it.

Perhaps the correct title for this article would have been : "Is Bolivia Catholic?", since the following observations spring from experiences in that country. Nevertheless, it is a fact that in other countries where the Roman Catholic tradition has its origin far back in Spanish colonial times, the church is faced by the same problems. This permits us to generalize from our limited experience to cover all Latin America.

Little contact with the church

When our Student Christian Movement in La Paz, the first entirely interdenominational student group in Bolivia, initiated its Bible studies, the first difficulty we had to confront was the false belief, shared by most of our supposedly Catholic

members, that the church forbids reading the Bible. The common attitude towards the Bible, held by the vast majority of our people without distinction of class, is one of complete indifference. From the intellectuals down to the masses, most of our people know the Christian religion only through traditional ceremonies, and are little aware of what constitutes our faith and belief as church members. The Bible is unknown to us as a book. It is considered rather as a religious object, like many other things in our homes, such as a rosary, or perhaps a candlestick.

Beginning with baptism, all religious ceremonies among the great majority of people are performed within the framework of old local customs and beliefs. For instance, a wedding in a poor Indian village in the Bolivian highlands (Altiplano) can hardly be recognized as a ceremony in which a Christian church is participating. Even though the priest is there, drunkenness and superstition predominate, and easily overpower the efforts of the modest servant of God, who sometimes even gives himself over to this type of activity. Insincere and wicked priests are frequently at work among those Latin American families which live in areas where civilization has hardly reached, and which form the bulk of our population.

These ceremonies, at which the sacraments are administered, are practically the only contact the ordinary family has with the church. Even in the city, it is hard to find a family that is able regularly to confide its problems to a priest. That is to say, there are very few occasions in the life of a so-called Catholic home when its participation and responsibility in the church are realized or even suspected.

A member of such a family is considered a more or less good Catholic, depending on how frequently he goes to mass or attends the religious processions. People of religious "convictions" are those attending mass in order to experience a "spiritual" moment, something very easily induced by Roman Catholic liturgy. But this same devoted individual, when expressing his thoughts on the problems of life, will say that his religion has nothing to do with his political convictions. This is the type of Christian who frequently opposes all social reform, the reactionary, the one who, in my country, has many times

proposed the extermination of the Indian as a solution to our social problems. He is a very poor Christian witness to society. He is to be held responsible for the violent reaction of youth against anything religious, that youth which sometimes accepts and follows extreme ideologies, but generally has an indifferent and contemptuous attitude towards Christianity itself.

Ignorance of the historical Jesus

Probably the greatest tragedy of our Roman Catholic people is their complete ignorance of the life and actual person of Jesus Christ. The university student who is nominally Catholic does not know even the historical Jesus at all well. This may not seem important, but the fact is that when the beliefs we hold about our Saviour are so few and so false, it is pretentious to call ourselves Christians. We think of Christ as the One who was crucified by the Jews (an excuse for the common prejudice against them) ; as the Lord of Miracles, who is in this or that church or in some sacred coffin ; as the poor and humble One who was put to death, but who was so miraculous that He even rose from the dead. To think of Christ is to smell the odour of incense, to see a tragic, bloody face, to hear funereal canticles. It is a frightening drama. It is a threat used to compel us to behave. We think of Him only in moments of pain ; it is considered frivolous to think of Him at times of joy and gladness. If we ever had to play the role of Christ in a drama, we would do so by walking slowly and solemnly as in a procession, talking in a low voice of gloomy subjects, envelopped in mystery and secrecy. We would never think of playing Him as one full of enthusiasm and good cheer, arguing and protesting vehemently, laughing and joking with men, a moving force for action, a source of real and dynamic love, just the opposite of the way He is depicted in church paintings.

In general, we spend no time meditating on the relationship between the events of Jesus' life almost two thousand years ago and those of our daily lives in this atomic age. This is precisely what happens when, through ignorance and self-satisfaction, we think that compliance with certain rules makes us good Christians.

Ignorance of Roman Catholicism

Equally serious is our ignorance of what Roman Catholicism is. In intellectual circles, as in the university, when the church is either attacked or defended, it is easy to see the superficial level of the opinions and judgments. This underscores a sorry truth: the lack of any significant influence of the church upon our intellectual life and our environment. It would be very difficult to find Catholics, even among the highly cultured classes, who are able to discuss the dogmas, the liturgy or the organization of the church. It would be impossible to find any among the masses.

A significant majority of our Catholic intellectuals and government people are of the sort who know their religion only through tradition, and display it only on such special occasions as Holy Week, Te Deums and processions. The oligarchic governments, which have generally gotten along rather well with the Roman Catholic Church, have forgotten their Christian beliefs when they have slain masses of labourers, for instance in the tin mines of Bolivia. Even though some revolutionary governments which have initiated social reforms have maintained good relations with the church, they can hardly be called Catholic. The same is true of the political leaders who have the support of the people in our Latin American countries; they generally are anti-clerical, and at best belong to the groups that says: "I do believe in God, but I laugh at the priests and what they stand for." Unfortunately, the priest is known mostly by his fire-and-brimstone sermons, which make the people either laugh or become fearfully superstitious, as is the case with the Indians.

To talk to a university professor about church matters is felt to be equivalent to pulling his leg. Don't even think of mentioning "purgatory" unless it is to tell a joke about it. Such an important centre in the cultural and scientific life of our nations as the university has little regard for the church, is basically indifferent to it. Of course, an exception must be made of universities administered by the Roman Catholic Church. It sometimes happens that a student who has received Roman Catholic instruction reacts violently against it when he enters

the university, to the point, for instance, of accepting communist ideas. In most cases this proves that religiosity was forced in high school. Often this same student will in the university be indifferent to religion and his conduct will be far from Christian. At the university, we frequently discuss communism, and in trying to uphold our anti-communist ideas we realize our weakness in such a discussion, our insufficient study and knowledge of the subject. Then we dust off our long-forgotten Catholicism, as an easy way out : "I'm Catholic, that's why I don't like communism." This closes the argument, we only prove once more how fanatical we are, and the one who comes out on top is the communist friend with whom we argued.

A closed, forgotten Bible ; our ignorance of Jesus' life and of our own beliefs, which are those of the church ; the general indifference of our Latin American people towards our religion ; the lack of influence of the church upon the life of the individual ; the wicked witness on the part of some so-called Catholics — these are some of the factors that determine the sad but true answer to our initial question : "Is Latin America Roman Catholic ?" Actually, it is clear that it is not.

Thus the church which represents Christianity on our continent has no influence on the life of our people. What is the significance of this for us Christians, Catholic and non-Catholic ? The gravity of the situation should force us to re-evaluate our approach to the problems of our people. We must admit that the approach of the Roman Catholic Church has been largely superficial and inadequate. We must also face the fact that there are certain ideological groups now at work in Latin America which are not Christian, but which include in their approach certain moral values and teachings of Christ. Unless we, as Christians, reconsider at once our position in relation to the crying needs of our people, it will be too late, for already these ideological groups are meeting in a vital way these immediate material needs.

The Christian task in Bolivia

When we turn to the special situation in Bolivia, it is easy to find an illustration of the position of Roman Catholicism in these times. Since 1952, when the National Revolution Party

came into power, we have been involved in the painful turmoil accompanying the entry of the masses into the life of the country in a determinative way for the first time.

Following the agrarian reform and other measures taken by the new government, three-fourths of our people began increasingly to come face to face with a world of responsibilities. This suddenly called for a response, which they were not prepared to give, to the problems of the society in which they are taking a fuller part.

This human mass needs to develop a way of thinking, an ideology, a doctrine upon which to base their lives in this time of awakening. This situation presents a problem for the minority groups in our country as well. These groups, which have traditionally been better off economically, intellectually and socially, provide the basis for the predominance of Catholicism in our land. They are facing a challenge in this hour, a challenge to give a truly Christian testimony. Sacramentarianism, processions, and the denouncing of communism are the emphases of the Roman Church. These things will no longer meet the needs of our people on any level.

In Bolivia there are two and a half million people who form the peasant families. Their evangelization is an urgent need. God is calling us to witness to them, and we can no longer postpone our response. These people, in their ignorance and weakness, are our heritage. Their true evangelization cannot consist merely in enrolling them as church members or baptizing their babies. It must instead be an attack on the concrete problems of their families. We must never again exhibit contempt for them, for their lack of culture as we know it. For it is clear that the Bolivian revolution has set before us the divine call in a way that permits of no evasion. The alternatives are well defined. Either Catholicism must respond, or it will pass into oblivion, the oblivion of the old, worn-out traditions, which today are nothing but bitter memories of the past. Neither should we forget that there are other elements, although materialistic, which are actively presenting their solutions to the problems of the people. It would not be difficult for the people to overcome their fear of hell, if someone would show them how to use a tractor or soap. These things mean progress for

them. Whatever helps them to progress holds the key to their release from the virtual enslavement in which they have been held since the time of the Inca. This enslavement was by so-called "Christians".

Most of what was said here might appear like exaggerated criticism of the Roman Catholic Church on the basis of its many shortcomings. But our purpose is different. Last January, when we had the Latin American SCM conference, the presence of Roman Catholic students from the La Paz SCM gave a new perspective to our task on this continent. We realized that the field for Christianization is larger than we had thought on the basis of our belief that we are all Catholics. It is hoped that this article has been something more than a mere listing of the defects of a Christian church in Latin America, that it will be rather a stimulus towards the realization of SCM responsibility for Roman Catholic students. The SCM can help us to be real members of our church, or at least to have a more intellectual and thoughtful understanding of the meaning and the mission of the Church and the Christian's personal responsibility to be and give a real testimony to God's love.

THE STUDENT WORLD CHRONICLE

Impressions of a Roman Catholic Student on a Federation Conference at Cochabamba

FERNANDO CERVANTES

To begin my impressions of this conference, I want to emphasize the outstanding work performed by the leaders of the World's Student Christian Federation in preparing and guiding this event. Particularly, I want to express my appreciation to our friends, Mr. and Mrs. Valdo Galland, and to all other leaders who participated in the conference and through whose collaboration the expected success was attained.

My position as a Catholic student

I consider myself a "nominal member" of the Catholic Church, a term which may be entirely new to some readers, but which, unfortunately, is a living reality to many Latin American Catholics. Due to the inherited practices of our people, we are considered members of the Catholic Church by its authorities just because we received the sacrament of baptism in our infancy. However, our beliefs could hardly be considered wholly Catholic.

The nominal Catholic is the result of a system of religious teaching administered by the clergy either in the church or in the classrooms of educational institutions. The dogmatic teaching is limited to the repetition by heart of doctrinal statements, which does not allow conscious and rational assimilation and understanding by the student. Parents brought up in the same educational system have no other way of meeting their children's doubts than with an intolerant "just because".

This religious nurture is based upon the Roman Catholic Church's assumption that the child will always be a loyal member. But it is of no help at all when the child becomes an adolescent and later on a youth. His contact with members of other churches and his progress in scientific studies confront him with questions to which his childlike catechism is unable to provide an answer. Too many youth, in fact the large majority of them, become indifferent to things religious, maintaining a nominal relation with the church, but with no real religious life. Others continue to carry in their souls endless doubts

and disappointments, seeing their fondest hopes broken, looking desperately for something that would bring them closer to God and help them to live as responsible Christians.

Why I entered the SCM

This situation, as described above, was my reason for entering the SCM. There were other secondary motives, of course, such as social and political conditions in my country and the situation of its youth. "Personal contact with a great man is a high and lively experience", says Henry-Louis Henriod in describing the personality of John R. Mott. We could apply this, in a more humble sense, of course, to our situation, in that contact with young Christians in the midst of a corrupt environment is an inspiration to always seek the truth. Young people in my country are living in a situation of total chaos. We lack a Christian voice that might help us to face our problems in a Christian mind and spirit. The university is the battlefield of political factions dividing our country, and our youth are dragged towards extreme political ideas and unrestrained moral laxity.

Once within the SCM, I find another reason for staying in it when I look at the scene presented by our youth. The only solution to the problems of our youth lies in their "Christianization". (Our SCM has created this term to avoid the connotations that the term "evangelization" has here as meaning membership in an Evangelical — Protestant — church.) Only the knowledge of the life and work of our Lord, knowledge that implies acceptance of Him as Lord of our lives, can change our youth's lives and ideals and thereby change our country. Becoming a member of the SCM has helped me survive as a Christian, to withstand attacks from the society in which I live, and at the same time to fight for a change in that society. It is with this background that I must give my personal witness to the results the Cochabamba conference has had in my own life. I think of the opportunity to attend this conference as one given me by God for a total spiritual renewal and as an ideal occasion to make decisions affecting my conduct and my future work.

The Cochabamba conference

I would like to evaluate my impressions of the Cochabamba conference in terms of my reactions to the various subjects discussed.

The theological basis of the conference was given in the title, "God's Call and Man's Answer". Personally, I felt as never before that God's relation with man is one in which God works, and that

through that work of God, and in answer to it, man can cooperate with Him. I have always believed in God, but here the mystery of the God who acts in a personal call to man was disclosed to me. This dialogue between God and man gives a new foundation for all social life, since the dialogue is not an end in itself but leads me to my neighbour. All Christian selfishness, which pretends to enjoy for its own sake the religious experience, is gone, and in its stead there is a new, deep conviction of responsibility before the tasks presented by the needs of the community and of the individual neighbour. This same fact of God acting and speaking with man raises in me a new consciousness of the nature of God's love for me, a love which is manifested in His interest in the dialogue.

The mission of the Church took shape in the word "evangelization". As we said above, we prefer to use the term "Christianization", but whatever word is used, the fundamental remains. The whole New Testament is a clear sign that the early Church accepted as her responsibility the proclamation of the historical facts about the person of Jesus and of its experience with Him, and that the one *raison d'être* of the Church is evangelization. The Church is responsible for carrying out this fundamental mission in all phases of human life. From our student standpoint, we must stress its evangelistic responsibility in the university. This work is particularly crucial in our universities where the student must be taken out of his self-sufficient attitude, what we might call a man-centred state of mind, and led to a God-centred approach which recognizes God's sovereignty over his intellect.

The demands of the times brought forth the ecumenical movement, which was the second phase of the Church's work emphasized at Cochabamba. We discovered here the pioneering work our SCMs must do in fostering an attitude of greater mutual tolerance among members of the various Christian groups. We must here bear witness to, and express our appreciation for, the effective way in which the Cochabamba conference contributed to the creation of a climate of respect, tolerance and understanding among all participants. That all this was possible, is a clear sign that the road to progress in ecumenical relations is wide open in South America.

Another subject that raised our interest high was that of the university. Because we live in it, all participants thought we already knew enough of its life and problems. But Cochabamba challenged us to think about the university in the perspective of God, to see it not only as a merely human institution but as one in which God has an interest and which is included in the redemption won by

Christ on the Cross. Before our eyes a new world of thought and therefore of practical implications began to open. We were all passionate defenders of the university reform in Bolivia a quarter of a century ago. Now we began to realize that such a reform, inspired by the idealism of youth, was based fundamentally upon secular preconceptions, and we saw ourselves facing the immense task of rethinking university life all over again from the point of view of our faith. Through this we came to realize, as never before, the relevance of our faith for everyday life.

One problem led to another. One solution led to other problems. When we tried to think of the university problem in Christ-centred terms, we immediately became aware of our need for a greater concentration on biblical and doctrinal studies. Our ignorance of the source of our faith and of the doctrinal statements of the Church is a handicap in our effort to interpret the university in a Christian way. In the same connection, thinking on the university led us to see our SCMs as groups embodying the idea of the university in a community life, in a brotherhood of students from several fields and departments of study, with the purpose of helping one another to supplement their respective partial views of the problem of man. We saw clearly the mission of an individual, living in such a community, but spending most of his time outside it, as one of witness to the student friend, to the individual who needs to hear of our faith in terms of his own problems. At the same time we saw such a mission in a more general, but equally important, sense, as that of constantly relating intellectual learning to our faith.

Every South American is a potential politician. The university campus is the training field from which the political parties draw their future leaders. Hence, the deep interest of all the conference participants in the social and political studies developed there. Here, as well as in the university problem, our big surprise came when we tried to think of the political problem in the framework of our faith. Of course, there were students of all political tendencies, and we were challenged to judge our ideas in the light of the Gospel. I will give some of my own personal reactions to the Latin American political problem; and I speak here in my own name, because I do not believe all of the conference participants would share my thinking. However, the expression here of my personal viewpoint may encourage the continuation of this discussion in the same spirit of loving understanding in which it was initiated in Cochabamba.

In the first place, the doctrines of God the Creator and of the Incarnation clearly establish that no field of human life is foreign to the responsibility of the Christian man; therefore, politics is

also a field of activity by right and by duty. The second fact stems from the first. Becoming deeply involved in study does not relieve the student of political responsibility. He cannot selfishly isolate himself from the problems of his community. Let me say clearly that ignoring the political problem or adopting a "neutral" attitude does not seem to me to be at all Christian. The Christian can never be a mere spectator, but must always be a living participant. Particularly in the conflict presented in all countries between Marxist leftist parties and the conservative rightist parties, I believe the Christian position is definitely on the side of the latter. Of course, this rightist militancy must be decided upon after a conscious study of the political doctrine and ideas of both parties. But this must always lead to a decision and to action. I believe, however, that we must avoid all romantic idealism concerning the party we choose, and must bring into the real situation all the Christian influence that we can contribute to it.

Role of the SCM

Before closing, I want to stress the important role that the SCM is called to play in leading students, who in the midst of doubts take refuge in it, to the peace of mind for which they are eagerly searching. The present situation of the youth of America and of the entire world is the raw material with which the SCMs can work to save America and the world. May these lines be a call and an invocation to the spirit of Christ in each SCM member, that all may confirm the victory of Christ through evangelization and thus contribute in a small way to the establishment of God's Sovereign Kingship in all the world.

* * *

In closing this article, I want to quote from Virgil and Palma :

As long as the rivers flow into the sea, the mountains shade the valleys, and there are stars in the sky, the memory of the benefit received will endure in the heart of the grateful man. (Virgil)

It is to the grateful heart never to forget the fountain that quenched his thirst, the tree that gave him freshness and shadow, and the gentle oasis where a new horizon was opened to his hope. (Palma)

This is how SCM "Roman Catholic" students feel towards all Protestant leaders and friends for the experiences we shared with them at the Cochabamba conference, for their friendliness and loving tolerance and understanding, which was a sign for us in our walking together towards the common goal — a world in Christ and Christ above all.

Commission Reports from the WSCF Leadership Training Course Cochabamba, Bolivia

DECEMBER 28, 1955 — JANUARY 12, 1956

REPORT OF THE ECUMENICAL COMMISSION

I. THE SCM AS AN INTERDENOMINATIONAL GROUP

We reaffirm our conviction regarding the ecumenical character of our Student Movements. We feel that the existence of our groups, formed of students belonging to different confessions, is the answer to an obvious need: an effective instrument of evangelization in the university.

By evangelization we understand the communication of the good news of the love of God manifested in Jesus Christ, in the belief that through this communication God Himself speaks and acts.

Because of their interdenominational composition and their specific task — evangelization, the Student Christian Movements have their own privileges and problems.

1. We believe that the efficacy of this evangelization is based on the prayer of Jesus, "That they all may be one that the world may believe".

2. The life of the SCMs should be sustained by constant prayer in fellowship. This prayer will deepen their ecumenical experience and will bear fruit in the work of evangelization.

3. An interdenominational community should enrich the Christian experience of its members. The mutual exchange of convictions, Bible study, discussion of our differences, communion in prayer, the apprenticeship in methods of evangelization, must all lead to a deepening of the spiritual life of the student, and we are confident that this in turn will lead to the elimination of all fanaticism and to better understanding and mutual respect.

4. By living as a unity in the SCM in spite of our confessional differences, we are called to testify to the churches that the work of evangelization in university circles — as anywhere else — is more effective when it is undertaken on an interdenominational basis. In this connection we point out:

a) The existence of these groups of Christian students in the university is an excellent means of helping students of Christian origin who, as experience has shown, would have lost their faith

and their connection with the Church if these organized groups had not existed.

b) These groups enable students to work together, who otherwise would be ineffective minorities if they formed separate denominational groups.

c) In the same way, our Movements enable us to bring the Christian message to those students who are so prejudiced against the churches that they would never go near them to listen to this message.

d) We also believe that if Christian work in the university is undertaken by an interdenominational group, it hinders the introduction of our own Christian divisions into the university for whose unity we feel deeply responsible.

5. All these advantages, which show the necessity of extending the Student Christian Movement in our America, should be expressed not only by declarations but by the effective evangelistic work of each group. This work of evangelization confided to the Christian community also implies an individual responsibility of witness. We therefore urge all members of the SCMs to revise their personal position towards their evangelizing responsibility.

6. It is inevitable that when we evangelize — bear witness to Jesus Christ — we come together with students who have every possible degree of relationship with a Christian church. We believe that our attitude as SCM groups towards every student — Protestant, Roman Catholic, atheist, etc. — should be essentially the same: to bear witness to Jesus Christ. We all need to be constantly evangelized; this does not mean proselytism, but a work of mutual testimony which leads us to think constantly about the reform of our lives and our churches.

7. We recommend that wherever possible contacts be established with other groups of Christian students — including Roman Catholics — leading to a mutual discussion of problems of common interest and especially to Bible study undertaken in common.

II. THE MEMBERS OF THE SCM AND THE CHURCHES

1. We consider it essential that every member of the SCM be organically related to some Christian church. The SCM can become a refuge for a certain time for those who believe that they cannot find sufficient spiritual food in the churches, or for whom the churches raise problems which seem to be in contradiction with their conscience. But the SCM must make it quite clear to its members that

it cannot be, and does not pretend to be, a substitute for the churches, but that each one of them must decide to share the scandal of the ecclesiastical divisions of some local church in the faith and hope of being able to work within these churches to overcome the scandal. As a Christian movement, the SCM cannot accept nor inspire a Christian life without participation in a church.

2. The SCM neither has, nor claims to teach, an official doctrine of its own, nor does it want to impose the doctrine of any particular confession. Nevertheless, in the spirit of fraternal fellowship of the SCM, we believe that it is possible and necessary to present the Christian doctrine without creating problems of relationships with churches and without violating any individual conscience. Consequently, every local SCM should periodically organize short courses on Christian doctrine for its members, taking care to ask representatives of different ecclesiastical confessions to lead these courses.

3. Experience shows that students who have been led to the Christian faith during their studies often find it difficult to decide which church to join. They very often see in the Protestant churches many signs of disloyalty to the Christian message, particularly dogmatism, sectarianism and moralist legalism. They also see in the Roman Catholic Church dogmatism, association with certain conservative politics, superstition, deviation from the Christocentric emphasis and a rigid hierarchical control.

We recognize that in these circumstances students of Christian origin can either return to the church of their fathers, although this may imply carrying the cross of Christian witness into it and working for its renovation and reform, however utopian it may seem; or they will have to look for another church in which they can find a more congenial spiritual home and greater freedom to fight for the cause of Christ.

4. The majority of the students who have found the Christian faith during the time of their studies encounter difficulties in finding a place in a local congregation during or after their stay at the university: they may find in such a congregation an attitude of intolerance or indifference towards their feelings or their scientific knowledge. It will be the duty of the SCM to prepare its members, not only to overcome these possible difficulties, but also to work for the renewal and revival of their churches.

5. Every student who has found the Christian faith through the witness of the SCM must be able to count on the active sympathy, the pastoral guidance and the intercessory prayers of his companions in the SCM.

III. THE SCM AND THE WORK OF ECUMENICAL "RAPPROCHEMENT" BETWEEN THE CHURCHES

1. The existence of the SCM should in itself be a testimony to the churches of the possibility of working together and of the efficacy of this work. It must be a true *movement*, so that the churches can perceive the testimony to which we refer.

2. We believe that the SCM should provide a meeting place for leaders and members of different confessions, where they can discuss their differences without compromise.

3. The SCM must awaken the enthusiasm of its members for the ecumenical ideal, so that they can convey it to their churches and through them work for unity.

4. The SCM should offer its cooperation in every united project, and in every possible union of the churches, that might be envisaged in the community, taking special responsibility for expressing these united efforts in the area of the university.

REPORT OF THE UNIVERSITY COMMISSION

OUR VOCATION IN THE UNIVERSITY

This text does not claim to be a statement reflecting a consensus of the commission, but is a report describing what was accomplished in the four sessions devoted to study by the commissions.

I. CHRISTIAN CONCEPTION OF THE UNIVERSITY

We began our work with a detailed study of the texts of the University Commissions of the conferences in Sitio das Figueiras and Matanzas ; we also took note of the major contents of the report of the University Commission of the WSCF General Committee at Nasrapur.

1. *Secular or theological point of view*

The texts of the two above-mentioned Latin American conferences gave us the impression of having been written under the influence of the secular point of view known under the name of "University

Reform"¹. Without disregarding the positive contribution of the conceptions and analyses of university reformism, it seemed to us that we, as Christians, should make an effort to envisage our subject from the standpoint of faith and of its implications for thought, or in other words, from the higher perspective of theology.

2. *The function of the university rather than the university itself*

Asking ourselves what should be the conviction of a Christian with regard to the university, it seemed to us that we should not begin by considering the university itself, but rather what, for the Christian himself, his presence and activity in this institution of higher learning signifies, since we are agreed that the university is there for man and not man for the university. The question that seemed to us to be fundamental was, therefore, what does it mean for us, as Christians, to be studying in the university?

3. *Study in the light of total redemption in Christ*

In finding an answer to that question, our point of departure was based on the conviction of the total redemption accomplished by Jesus Christ, which not only affects individuals, but the whole of creation (Col. 1: 17-20; see also Rom. 8: 18-23). Viewed from this perspective, the Christian knows not only that he is justified by the sacrifice of the Son of God, but also that through this redeeming act, creation and the human possibility of understanding and using it are definitely confirmed (Gen. 1: 28 and 2: 19). In the light of this revelation, the scientific and cultural efforts of man, in a word, his learning, manifest the glory of God the Creator, and contribute to the welfare of mankind and of the human community.

4. *Positive conception of the university*

Therefore, the possibility of studying and the very existence of a university are gifts of grace from God, granted to us in addition to the gift of salvation. This leads us to a very positive conception of the university. It is a gift of grace, a privilege that God grants to mankind; it is also involved in the cosmic redemption accomplished by Christ; even the work done by every man in the university is involved in that total redemption. Before we criticize the university or the work which is done within it, it is necessary to have this vision of the place of the university in the plan of God, and the consciousness that through it men are called to collaborate

¹ This movement began in Cordoba, Argentina, in 1918, and has spread to most of the Latin American countries.

in the work of God, manifesting His wisdom and His glory as reflected in His creation. We must remember that before judgment there is pardon. So the hand of God is in the university, in spite of the fact that the men and women of the university are unaware of it. The moral idealism and the generosity of soul of many of them, in spite of their erroneous conceptions¹, are a sign for the Christian of this fundamental reality.

II. THE CONCRETE AND HUMAN REALITY OF THE UNIVERSITY

1. *Sin and study*

The consideration of the concrete and human reality of the university confirms what is revealed to us by grace : the sinful state of humanity in general and of the university in particular. Nevertheless, human sin should not be entirely identified with study and research or with the use of the human intelligence. We know that all these have their place in God's creation. But the cause of sin lies in self-sufficient research and in the resulting self-deification of science and culture. This attitude denies the cosmic redemption in Jesus Christ and the subsequent fact that in Him all the treasures of wisdom and science are hidden.

2. *The most serious deficiencies of our universities*

This explains the greatest deficiencies of the university in our countries, which have already been pointed out by the University Commission of the Matanzas conference, and which affect the very orientation of study : the intellectual life goes on under the influence of a dogmatic education (materialism, anthropocentrism, etc.) which limits the scope of scientific investigation. Most of the other criticisms which can be made of our universities, especially with regard to their organization, originate from this fundamental evil. We have not thought it necessary to re-enumerate all these deficiencies (material equipment, problems related to the professors and students, finances, etc.) as was done at Sitio das Figueiras and Matanzas. But we believe that if the university would fulfil the divine calling of learning, it would be better able to serve society, and in turn the latter would take greater interest in the normal working of its centres of higher learning.

¹ For example, the belief that humanity can only reach the goal of ultimate perfection through the progress of science or the promotion of culture.

3. *The social function of the university*

These thoughts brought us to a consideration of the social function of the university, especially with regard to the increasing ascendancy of the working and peasant classes. In this respect we found justified the denunciation of the General Committee of Nasrapur, of the two erroneous ideas of the nature of the university : (a) the university at the exclusive service of an ideology which accentuates the pragmatic character of knowledge and disregards and despises the search for truth independently of social forces ; (b) the university entirely confined to the realm of knowledge pursued for its own sake without any regard for contemporary conditions and neglecting its cultural and social functions. It was noted that the tendencies of the governments in some of our countries to dominate the universities and to impose a determined ideology could very well proceed from an extremist reaction — sometimes fomented by demagoguery — directed against the “ivory tower” of the university which, confined within its academic walls, had neglected its social function.

4. *University autonomy*

The problem of the autonomy of the university was then debated, and it was unanimously agreed that liberty of research is the inalienable right of the university. In the full possession and exercise of this freedom, autonomy is not indispensable. But it was also strongly emphasized that in numerous cases autonomy is the only safeguard of free search after knowledge. (In certain cases the affirmation of university autonomy is used as a disguise for political ideas in order to gain adherents among the students. This makes the real problem of autonomy still more difficult.) We further discussed the concrete problem confronting the Christian student when he participates in actions in favour of the restoration of the autonomy of the university : the danger that may arise when the first duty of the student — his study — is forgotten in the participation in a political struggle. Finally and along the same lines, university reform was repudiated when it is interpreted as an end and not as a means. The necessity for a renewal of the reform was stressed, to enable us with a more realistic outlook to confront our present situation, which is different from the one existing in 1918.

III. THE MISSION OF THE SCM IN THE UNIVERSITY

After having considered the Christian, study and the university and the present situation of the university, during our last session we discussed the mission of the SCM in the university field.

1. *Evangelization and edification in the SCM*

We began by affirming that without a clear conviction regarding Jesus Christ evangelization, which is the very reason for the existence of the SCM in the university, cannot be undertaken. The necessity for Bible study and doctrinal knowledge was therefore emphasized, but it was also made clear that this knowledge should be acquired for the purpose of personal edification and evangelistic work, and not only for mere personal satisfaction.

2. *Evangelization and the community function of the SCM*

The evangelizing activity of the SCM includes the community function through which the SCM constitutes a sort of microcosm of the ideal university, where knowledge is not divided into specialized departments but is integrated into a common life. This need not prevent Christian students of the various faculties from meeting together with others of their own faculties, either for practical reasons or for the purpose of studying specific problems pertaining to the professions for which they are training in answer to the call of God.

3. *Testimony and intellectual work*

Intellectual work which endeavours to establish a bond between Christian faith and the knowledge acquired in the university constitutes the central effort to bear a clear Christian witness among fellow students. This work is founded on the conviction stressed at the beginning of our discussion regarding the role of the Christian student in the university and the place of the latter in God's plan. If we take this perspective our attitude will not become one of vain and sterile intellectualism. The convictions thus acquired are those which we ought to share with our comrades, not in a general way, but in adapting our language to each individual person and becoming real friends of our fellow students who do not yet know the Christian faith.

4. *Testimony and participation in the university*

Testimony through study itself is complemented by participation in the organic life of the student societies and of the university. We must take into account : (a) the splendid opportunity offered us to bear witness by word and deed in the assumption of leading positions in student and university organizations or in active participation in favour of improvements in the university ; (b) the danger that may lie in allowing ourselves to become absorbed by these activities and in neglecting the evangelization directly connected with

study itself, and consequently in accepting a divorce between our faith and the science acquired by study.

5. *Evangelization and devotional life*

All our evangelizing activity should be inspired by a profound devotional life, seeking to know God's will for our daily life. But a devotional life which would separate us from the full life of the university would be radically wrong.

6. *Evangelization and social function*

In relation with the function of the university in society, it was considered that the SCM, as a microcosm of the ideal university, should awaken in its members a spirit of sacrifice and a profound sense of mission, especially towards those areas where living conditions are most difficult and where economic, social, and cultural developments are non-existent or exist only precariously.

7. *Practical recommendations*

Among other practical recommendations, it was pointed out that the SCM should procure the inclusion of free courses of theology and of the history of religions in the university, as well as a service of information with the object of helping new students to discover the profession best suited to their vocation. The suggestion made at Matanzas that "in every case where it is possible, efforts should be made to obtain an official recognition of the SCM as one of the student organizations within the university" was reaffirmed.

8. *Conclusion*

The task of the SCM in the university was summed up in the statement that it should acknowledge with humility and take up with faith the important place assigned to it in the divine plan of redemption.

The University in Brazil

JORGE CÉSAR MOTA

Some statistics and history

The 1955 figures give 715 institutions of higher education in Brazil, of which 364 form part of the seventeen universities, the remainder being isolated units. Of the universities, four are maintained by the Roman Catholic Church; one, of Protestant origin,

is of liberal outlook ; the rest are lay institutions. Private initiative is responsible for over fifty-three per cent of all courses, which have forty-three per cent of the staff and forty-two per cent of the students. The federal government answers for thirty-four per cent of all courses and forty-four per cent of staff.

Out of the total of 72,650 university students in 1955, twenty-eight per cent were in law schools, twenty-six per cent in medicine and similar courses, seventeen per cent in philosophy, science and letters, and twelve per cent in engineering. The remainder were in economics, liberal arts and agricultural courses.

There is marked preference on the part of students for courses which will enable them to remain in the cities, and particularly the large cities, after they complete their studies. This is noticeable in regard to the different branches of engineering. Eighty-two per cent chose branches of engineering which would enable them to work on buildings, dams and roads, for as a foreign professor said not long ago, "machines can be imported". In the opinion of the same professor, the number of architects and engineers in Brazil is only forty per cent of the number that would be required to put Brazil today on the level which the United States had attained in 1890.

However, there are indications of progress. The number of students training for secondary school teaching, for instance, is increasing rapidly from year to year, even in comparison with the general increase in the number of university students, which amounted to seventy-seven per cent between 1940 and 1950 and to ninety-three per cent in the last five years. Women students comprise some twenty-five per cent of the whole, which, according to UNESCO figures, places Brazil only just below the United States and Italy, and slightly above Belgium and Denmark, in this respect.

The universities in Brazil are of very recent origin, since the system had always been that of isolated colleges. In recent years, as new courses were established, some of the colleges were grouped together under the name of universities ; there had to be at least three, of which one was a college of philosophy, science and letters. The São Paulo University, which is one of the oldest, is twenty-two years old, and now has over 7,000 students.

Some criticisms

A definite effort to improve university education in Brazil may be noted. In some cases it has attained a level of excellence equal to any in the world, as, for instance, in the case of the School of Medicine of the University of São Paulo. In most cases, however, there is still a long way to go.

The first reason for this is the deficiency of education at the lower levels. There are four main weaknesses in the foundation courses. In the first place, education is aristocratic. More is spent on the 70,000 university students than on all elementary education in Brazil. A great educationalist, Dr. Anísio Teixeira, recently put it like this: we divide our children into two classes, the intelligent and the unintelligent. They can all come to the elementary schools, but only the intelligent children will get any attention. Thus selection begins. Education is for the intelligent, to train an aristocracy, an *élite*. And how are the intelligent children selected? By how vocal they are — facility of speech, ability to express themselves, to recite poetry and make speeches. The process of selection proceeds naturally; the children who are “left over” drift into the factories as soon as the law permits, and go to make up the vast, uneducated, ignorant mass of the working class. In terms of figures, thirty per cent of the children drop out after the first year at school, and only fifteen per cent of the remainder complete the four years of the elementary course. Only 200,000 begin the secondary course, and only 20,000 matriculate and go on to the universities to become “doctors” of something or other — a traditional place in the Brazilian sun where they can bask at their ease. These 20,000 will have to prepare themselves to face a selective examination in which very often there are 1,500 candidates for as few as eighty places.

The second weakness is the lack of correlation between the secondary and university courses; and the third the lack of competent secondary school teachers. Until a few years ago, when the teachers’ training schools were established, secondary school teachers were largely people from other walks of life who needed to make a little extra money. The fourth weakness is the encyclopaedic conception of teaching in the secondary schools; pupils simply do not have time to cover the syllabus properly, nor really to learn the vast field of subjects covered by it.

But there are also deficiencies in the university courses themselves. The first is the bureaucratic administration system of the colleges. Principals and tutors are often more enforcers of rules and regulations than teachers and scholars, and spend more of their time in meetings and discussions than in teaching and study. Administrative expenses run to fantastic figures. Suffice it to say that the University of São Paulo spends twice as much annually at the official exchange rate as does Columbia University in New York, though it has only one-third the number of students and one-sixth the number of teachers.

Secondly, the university year is extremely short — one of the shortest in the world. After deducting the four months of vacation, the numerous bank holidays and saints' days, and sometimes student "strikes", there is little time left for lectures. To compensate for this, the number of lectures per day is increased; in the engineering courses they reach forty a week. As a third deficiency there may be noted the system of notebooks instead of textbooks, although this is not true of all the schools. Fourthly, unless a student is rich, his economic difficulties are almost insuperable. According to a recent enquiry, ninety-seven per cent of the students in the night courses at one of the colleges in São Paulo attended these courses in order to be able to work during the day. While an Italian student spends an average of sixty-five dollars a month, a German student forty to sixty dollars, a Portuguese fifty dollars and an Argentinian eighty dollars, a Brazilian student requires one hundred and fifty dollars. Actually there are very few full-time students in Brazil, and outside Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo comparatively few full-time teachers. In reality, therefore, "university" is a misnomer for an institution whose students and tutors make of it a "spare-time and amateur activity", as a professor in the University of Rio de Janeiro has called it.

Spiritually speaking

If it is true that in the universities in Brazil the mediaeval concept of equating encyclopaedic knowledge with general education prevails, at least we can claim that there is nothing mediaeval about our outlook on theology and the place it should occupy in the university. With few exceptions, Brazilian scholars are not noted for their spirituality, and on no condition would they admit that theology has any rights. The predominant attitude in the universities, possibly even in the Roman Catholic universities, at least as far as the students are concerned, is that of the spirit of self-interest in preparing to occupy a well-paid position in society. The meaning of life, Christian action in society, the meaning of history, and spiritual values, are all secondary.

What a "mission field" these universities present for the SCM!

Letter from Indonesia

Marie-Claire Frommel, formerly General Secretary of the Swiss SCM and a minister of the Swiss Reformed Church, recently arrived in Indonesia to serve as Study Secretary of the Indonesian SCM.

I received my visa while all my theologian friends were still awaiting theirs, and I had scarcely arrived when I had the privilege of sitting in on the Asian-African Students' Conference. From my interpreter's box, I translated all the plenary sessions, participated in the work of the commissions, and, during the endless hours of waiting, I had many, many interesting conversations, especially since my function seemed to have imparted to me the halo of trustworthiness.

The Indonesian students had prepared this conference in every detail. The interest of the press, the presence of government people, clearly showed that this conference was considered as one of the landmarks on the road towards self-rediscovery on the part of Asia and Africa.

The task of the assembly was to treat all student problems and to promote solidarity among university youth of these two continents. This solidarity is based, naturally, on the colonial experience common to both, and on the quest for liberty. This liberty is needed so that man may know his own dignity, and so that nations may find their own true faces. It is not merely a matter of condemning the exploitation of individuals, and calling for an improvement of the standard of living of the impoverished masses. It involves a faith — quite similar to that of the Resistance in war-time Europe : any foreign occupation is wrong, for it necessarily cheapens the quality of human relations by creating a class of servile and opportunistic intermediaries who do more to destroy the native pride of a people than even misery can do. Under occupation, only those who accept foreign standards of judgment are admitted to positions of responsibility, and this sows doubt in the hearts of even the best.

In condemning all colonialism, the Asian-African Students' Conference was not giving way to a political tendency; it was expressing an essentially spiritual conviction. Moreover, practical

motives also led it to take this position : the effort that the newly independent nations put forth in the field of education is four to five times greater than that of the colonial administrations (recently in Asia, and still so for the greater part of Africa).

But condemning colonialism left the road open to demagoguery, and the conference was not strong enough to avoid this pitfall. Its preparatory committee had gravely underestimated the political difficulties. The influence of the views of the International Union of Students (communistic leanings) and of the Coordinating Secretariat of National Unions of Students (Western leanings) could not fail to be felt. And had the conference really wished to constitute a sort of "third force", it should have prepared ahead of time its positions on litigious points. But it hoped to ignore these, and act as if it didn't notice that the Arab nations composed a solid bloc within its body.

The difficulties found their expression, as in the United Nations, on the level of formalities (agenda, validity of the mandates (a) of students of colonial countries lacking a university, (b) of associations formed away from the homeland, (c) of professional students and of young professors, (d) of government subsidies given to certain delegations, etc.).

The difficulty was all the worse by virtue of the fact that decisions had to be unanimous. The opposition of the Philippine delegate was felt as a lack of confidence in brother members. It had been determined beforehand that the conference *had* to be a success, and the Indonesian president bent every effort, with a patient obstinacy, to persuade the delegates that the divergent points of view were really "almost identical". Agreement, even purely formal, is well worth a compromise of ideas. In such an atmosphere, serious work could scarcely be accomplished. The declarations based solely on the Indonesian preparatory document remained quite general, and the conference was unable to create a permanent liaison set-up, or to plan on a second meeting.

That we may bear witness

The Indonesian SCM participated in the preparatory work of the conference ; its president was ex-officio a member of the national delegation, and several of its members participated in the assembly in various capacities. Our General Secretary led an opening service on the theme : "Jesus Christ, the Reconciler". Its text was distributed to all the delegates, and led to a regrouping of the Protestant Christians and sympathizers present (delegates and journalists).

Moreover, the presence of Christians probably prevented the voting of a motion of censure against Israel, and our members endeavoured in all humility to fulfil the role of mediators.

The declaration of the WSCF when it was meeting with the International Union of Students served us as guide: "Our primary aim is to speak of Jesus Christ to our student comrades. This conversation should be carried on in an understandable language. In this particular case, we are ready to speak of peace in connection with political tensions, because we believe that Jesus Christ is the Prince of Peace, and that this conviction affects our relations with God and with man. We know that that is not easy, and that such conversations will lead to misunderstandings... But so that we may bear witness, we wish to maintain relations with all."

We greatly regretted the fact that only the Malagasy delegation contained Christians, that the SCMs of Asia and Africa had done nothing to join in their national delegations, and that many countries with strong Christian minorities abstained for fear of giving the conference a tendentious slant (South Korea, Hong Kong, Gold Coast, South Africa, etc.). The Christian schools have played a pioneering role in Asia and Africa, and we are convinced that the Christian universities have a like task at the present time. True, we have often asked ourselves what was the particular contribution we could make as Christians. The earnestness with which this question has been posed makes it clear that it is out of the concrete necessity of bearing witness that both theological reflection and prayer fountain up. In this sense, I believe that the policy of being always present within the world of students is one of the strong points of the Indonesian SCM. This presence can also serve to bring the non-Christian students to confront certain essential questions. Even though we are realists and are fully cognizant of our weaknesses, we have the courage to believe that God is able to act through us.

During this conference, I was astonished to see how greatly the desire for freedom dominates the minds and hearts of the students. It summons up the best and the worst in them, and renders them insensible to that other form of solidarity — which is no longer based on recent history, but rather on the cultural function of the university as such: freedom of thought, which knows no frontiers. This is, of course, admitted, but it no longer stirs up any fervour.

In this sense, the failure of the civilizing mission of the West thrusts itself upon us: the Asian and African students have inherited our educational system and our knowledge, but they have the impression of having acquired them from an alien caste, and not

of having received them from friends. Thus they only feel linked to us by the intermediary of values recognized by all, such as the Declaration of the Rights of Man. This document, which we all too willingly neglect, becomes here the very touchstone of a culture which escapes us. This awareness is expressed above all in political terms, but it goes still deeper. Should not Christians accord greater attention to this dimension and to this mode of speech, so as to help their peoples to understand the cultural and spiritual implications thereof ?

Assembly of the Indonesian Council of Churches

After this initiation into the world of students, I was overjoyed to be able to participate in the assembly of the Indonesian Council of Churches, which every three years brings together delegates, both lay and clerical, from all the Protestant churches of the country.

This assembly had extraordinary ecumenical repercussions. Never have I heard the Evanston Reports so often quoted. And I found again the dual concern of giving the delegates a new inspiration by a number of broad conferences, and of allowing them the opportunity for study together in the commissions. I saw how, through the action of the departments of this Council (whose titles are virtually the same as those in Geneva), the churches are coming closer together. The effort towards unity is shown, here too, by a reawakening consciousness of the role of the Church in the world. The presence of some neighbouring churches of Asia and Australia, of the Ecumenical Council, of missionary societies from Holland, Switzerland and the United States, added a still more extensive ecumenical note.

To be sure, the confessional problem does not have the same acuity here. The differences among churches are more cultural than theological, and are at about the same level as those of the Swiss Federation of Churches. But while Swiss federalism is justified in cultural matters by a long tradition, here regionalism threatens the unity of the nation, and the relations of the majority with the minority groups of Chinese origin are strained.

But the unity of the Church cannot be based on these sociological considerations. (Why, for that matter, are all the churches organized on the national level ?) The reason for this should be sought elsewhere. The unity of the Church should demonstrate that the Lord does away with divisions among Bataks, Javanese and Chinese quite as much as between "Jews and Greeks". Unity can only be one obedience. There are, furthermore, a great number of tasks which call for the closest collaboration : relations with the Ministry

of Religious Affairs (religious lessons in school, almonry in the army), theological education, formation of youth movement leadership, of leaders responsible for parochial work, of teachers for Christian schools, the study of social questions, together with action in this field, missionary strategy, mutual aid, etc.

The assembly worked hard. Activity reports were received from the departments of the Council, plans were made, the commissions presented documents on church unity, the role of money in the Church, evangelization and missions, the Church and society. The discussions did not have the liveliness we like to find, but on the other hand there was none of the stiffness of the know-it-alls. I was struck by the extreme honesty with which the debate was carried on. The delegates did not try to pretend to be more informed or more intelligent than they were ; they did not spend time praising their own church. The church here is poor, in people, in instruction, in money. And it knows this. But it also finds in its ranks a small number of remarkable men, and it is prepared to listen to them.

These churches, certain of which have in the past tended to exist somewhat on the fringe of society, are now forcing themselves to turn outward and to work for mankind. Their leaders are persuaded that they do not have "interests to defend", but people to serve. Thus, religious liberty is understood to be, not a right of the Christian minority, but a right that is required for all men, believers or atheists.

The Indonesian state is founded on the five principles of the Unity of God, Humanity, Nationalism, Social Justice and Democracy. And it has been seriously questioned whether this first principle should not be modified, not only because of the risk that the Islamic interpretation might tend to impose itself as the only correct one, but also to safeguard the liberty of those who do not believe in God. (They felt, however, that it should be kept.)

Thus the churches turn towards social and political questions : bases of the constitution, the government's five-year plan, the answer to communism, and the spiritual deepening of the foundations of a socially slanted democracy, rural reconstruction, the problems of the large cities, "and this, so as to better the lot of men and to bring them to the Gospel". Christian witness must have this deeper dimension.

The ecumenical study on "The Christian Responsibility towards Areas of Rapid Social Change" has come to be included as a necessary element in the work of the assembly, and the contribution of Mr. M. M. Thomas (India) was greatly appreciated. The ecumenical movement has helped open this "profane" dimension to Christian

witness. It also permits the churches of Asia, which have substantially the same problems, to afford mutual aid and to sense their togetherness. It frees them from that involuntary guardianship which the presence of the missionaries involves ; for it is quite clear that the missionary societies, with a limited, but chosen and consecrated personnel, have a certain advantage as compared to a church composed of people of every sort. The Ecumenical Council has permitted the churches here to rediscover the churches of the West from an equal footing (and indeed they have no fewer problems and difficulties), and to share with them the heritage of the Universal Church and the quest for one obedience in this present time.

ASIAN TRAVEL DIARY

J. EDWARD DIRKS

I am sitting down to prepare this brief diary of some of the outstanding happenings and impressions after more than four months of travel to visit fifteen countries, most of them in Asia. Covering more than 30,000 miles — by everything from airplanes, trains and buses, to jeeps bikes and on foot — to have discussions, conferences and consultations with professors, students, administrators, SCM and church leaders; asking questions and listening to others' concerns; interpreting developments in higher education and the University Commission, as well as giving close attention to the judgments and the problems of others, and spending many hours in informal conversations across a meal, or a cup of tea or coffee — all this helped to give me a down-to-earth view of the tribulations and joys of a Federation secretary. As I look back over the "log", I realize that there were fewer than the equivalent of three days given to sight-seeing, though I was tempted many times to call for a halt and head for the nearest place of interest and relaxation. Getting tired and lonely was no real problem, however, even though the nights spent in about one hundred different beds were short, and I was often among those whom I had not known before. The inspiration of a world-wide Christian fellowship and the devotion and faith of others were at all times a source of sustenance, strength and joy. There are more persons to thank for their generous kindness than either the space here permits or thank-you letters will cover.

This was the first period of travel I have been privileged to undertake on behalf of the University Commission of the WSCF, and in relation to its joint program with Yale University and the Edward W. Hazen Foundation. It was designed primarily to gain understanding of the developments in various Asian countries, particularly as these related to the University Commission, and to share ideas and insights, as well as to profit from associations within the university communities around common educational and Christian concerns. It was, moreover, of more than ordinary importance, because so many of the discussions and meetings had a direct relevance for the plans which were to be considered for the University Commission during the years ahead at the General Committee in Germany in August.

An "uncommitted" area

Almost two weeks in Europe at the end of February and early March provided opportunities, first, for some conversations with members of the UNESCO secretariat in Paris; second, participation in the Federation's Ecumenical Consultation at Bossey, and third, some advance work for the August meetings in the office at 13 rue Calvin. Then, on a clear, cold night I took off from Geneva, and after brief stops in Rome and Athens, and a bird's-eye view of Alexandria at dawn, I arrived in Cairo early on March 9. Here I found myself in one of the "gateways" to the Orient — an old but for me a new and a different world! With the help of President and Mrs. McLain of the American University, and through the discussions which were arranged with many of the members of the staff and student body, I began to be introduced to some of the unique problems higher education confronts in a non-Western setting. Rapidly changing societal structures, concerns about "neutrality" and its many meanings, the diversities of language and cultural backgrounds, the role and responsibility of education in relation to new national or regional aspirations — these and many more began to come into clearer view then, and the poignancy of each of them deepened as later weeks and months went by. Time did not permit further visits in the Middle East — that unpredictable, somewhat "uncommitted" area of new nationalism, a sorely troubled spot of the earth — though I wish it had. There are, I am sure, new possibilities for the development of some Christian work in and for the universities in this area.

Post-partition Pakistan

As the plane flew eastward across the Sinai peninsula early one morning, my thoughts took me back many centuries to that "Exodus" in which our Old Testament discovered some of the meaning of deliverance, of discipline, and of man's true destiny. I marvelled that such riches of faith had been born in such apparently abandoned bleakness, multiplied by nature's foreboding and by the people's murmurings. After only a day in Karachi, I hurried on to Lahore, where occasions were provided for some valuable discussions at both Kinnaird College for Women and Forman Christian College — the two widely known Christian colleges in West Pakistan — and for some discussions with key leaders at the University of the Punjab. In the Christian colleges, any interest in theoretical "university questions" was dwarfed by the overwhelming tasks which confront them in the Muslim, post-partition setting. Serious attention was

being given by both to the ways in which a Christian college can express its essential purposes and character, and, more specifically still, to the objectives which might be appropriate for the required biblical studies. The remarkable recovery of Kinnaird College after the partition period, and the developments in social research and science at Forman, compared favourably — though on a smaller scale — with the new Regional Scientific Laboratory, Science Library, and Human Relations Research Centre which are currently dwarfing all other rapid developments — even the building of a wholly new campus — in the University of the Punjab.

India

A severe dust, rain and wind storm caused an eighteen-hour delay in getting on to India. But, upon arrival in New Delhi, both Harry Daniel and M. M. Thomas were on hand to rush me off to a series of SCM consultations at St. Steven's College, which were already in progress. For the next week my mind was being soaked with the details of university education, the SCM's program, and the churches' work in India. At first it seemed incredible that some 300,000 or more students are enrolled in the thirty-three universities and distributed among more than 1,000 colleges, even though the university's history is just less than one hundred years old. With the help of some government officials and leaders of the SCM and the churches, intensive consideration was given to such large problems as these: the need for a clarification of educational purposes in relation to national purposes, the implications of the newly organized pattern of secondary and higher education, new developments of university financing, the responsibilities of education both to individuals as persons and to society, and the need for a new type of Christian apologetics, based upon freedom and responsibility, especially in the university context, as the unique contribution of the Christian colleges to the foundations of culture. The recognition that the old supports provided by colonialism have vanished, that many of the earlier points of reference in cultural tradition have been rejected, but that new patterns have not yet developed, provided the kind of challenge which was stirring in these meetings. An especially important case was made for the role which an historical religion, with its existentialist philosophical implications, has within the kind of culture which has failed to find its modern bearings in spirituality and syncretism. This underscored the role of evangelism for the SCM and the churches, the importance of the Christian fellowship, and the need for a significant Christian contribution to the humanistic quest for man and society.

During the next month or more, in visits to many of the universities in all parts of India, as well as in a Madras Seminar on General Education and a University Teachers' Conference at Ootacamund, I had occasions to visit classes, talk at length with administrators, professors and students, visit student service projects in villages, consider with others the educational developments which are currently taking place around "general education", meet with University Christian Teachers' Fellowships, and with SCM leaders, etc. The Seminar on General Education, officially held under the auspices of the University Teachers' Association, was one of the outstanding meetings of both Christians and non-Christians devoted to the serious discussion of university issues. The "Ooty Conference" gave attention to a wide range of subjects, but especially significant among these was the attempt to gain a Christian understanding of the university's responsibility in society — that is, its tasks with respect to "national reconstruction", to new schemes of value, and to new dimensions of culture both for individuals and society. The view that the state is essentially "secular", providing for freedom and requiring dialogue among viewpoints and faiths, appeared to be the underlying premise upon which the role of the university, the SCM and the Christian colleges was being reconsidered.

Ceylon

After a series of visits to Agra, Benaras, and Shanteneketan, several days in Calcutta brought my stay in India to a close. However, I failed to mention that there was an interlude of several days for a visit to Ceylon — first to see D. T. Niles and Jaffna, then to visit Colombo, and also to spend a day in Kandy and Peridenya. A number of small meetings were possible — despite the distractions of the campaigning for the national elections! Both India and Ceylon made vivid for me what I had so long heard about — namely, that drastic alterations in political forms or desires for them are creating the kind of ferment which is new in Southeast Asia (or as some might say, Southwest Asia). The transitions which are taking place create not only new and dramatic opportunities, but also very real problems around issues of power, nationalism, language and industrialization. Additional issues centre around the resurgence of the major non-Christian religions, frequently in coalition with nationalism, but nevertheless representing the kind of power in human life which almost defies description. In the midst of all this, there is the Christian minority, often disproportionately influential, yet often disturbed by the confusion created by funda-

mentalist sects and by an assumed identification of Christianity with the "West".

Rangoon and Bangkok

Upon arrival in Rangoon, I was glad to be met by Dr. Hla Thwin who teaches psychology in the university and is one of the primary leaders in University Commission work. We went to meet Dr. Hla Bu and others in both university and government circles. Nearly a week in Rangoon provided opportunities for a large number of private discussions with some of the key persons in education. We also had several meetings of the University Commission and related groups to consider the central problems of the university and the Christian's work in it. A mood of reticence to raise too many issues, deepened by recent student strikes and government pressures, seemed to militate against the stimulation of intellectual inquiry and the role of the university as an arena for the free and open encounter of ideas. However, my personal impressions may have been influenced by the fact that most of the professors were busy with the reading of examination papers — an activity which is not, I am sure, conducive to incentives for widening and deepening intellectual freedoms! There were many encouraging developments among the Christians on the teaching staff, especially since they reported that they could meet to consider university problems, not only by themselves but also with Christian students; this, they pointed out, was quite remarkable in a situation where there seemed often to be an absence of such discussions between teachers and students.

A few days in Bangkok brought me into a somewhat different climate of political and educational thought. Talks with a number of university people, representatives of the ministry of education, and with professors in the Fulbright exchange program introduced me to some of the current, live issues in the six major universities there. The Christian community in higher education is again relatively small — totalling perhaps less than one hundred — and there were no indications that a professors' group had been begun or that there was any deep demand for it. The Student Christian Centre provides a point of reference for Christian work in higher education; its new buildings are, however, just beginning to be fully utilized.

Hong Kong

The breath-taking landing at the Hong Kong airport nearly overshadowed the importance of being in not only a beautiful city but also in a place which has a more concentrated and larger

refugee population than anywhere else in the world. The days in Calcutta had already introduced me to the so-called "refugee problem", for there were some 20,000 refugees pouring into or through Calcutta each month. Hong Kong, however, in addition to serving as a listening post between the free world and the communist mainland, has a population of one million or more refugees, many of them intellectuals, and eight colleges which serve almost wholly as refugee colleges. The more stable of these colleges are Chung Chi and New Asia, both of which are building up excellent educational programs and new buildings. Chung Chi's new campus, which was being built in the "New Territories", will be one of the most beautiful campuses in the Far East. Unfortunately, the fact that Hong Kong University has a monopoly on higher education has precluded any of the refugee colleges from granting degrees; the students who complete their courses in such colleges frequently attend briefly another institution, either a teachers' college or a sister institution in Taiwan, for the actual degree.

Being in Hong Kong makes possible some concentrated reflection upon conditions on the Chinese mainland. Movement is relatively free for many to visit the mainland, and there are many opportunities for discussions with persons who have made such visits. The incidents reported to me indicated the growing desire and ability to renew relationships between Christians on the two sides of the bamboo curtain. From various reports, it appears that university and theological education is, of course, moving forward in China, with university enrolments large and vital, and the four theological schools appearing to carry on well with their responsibilities. Discussions about the life of the churches in China led to reports that they are increasingly cooperative with one another, that congregations in city churches at least are large, and that a kind of theological realism with respect to social issues has been developing among the Christians in China.

Japan

I arrived in Japan one evening for a stay of more than five weeks. The first three weeks were spent in Tokyo, visiting many of the universities there — though I did not see all 147 of them. There were discussions, conferences, lectures and meetings, not only with professors and students, but also with many educational organizations and government officials. The fact that on the first day in Tokyo, Kentaro Shiozuki, my excellent guide, interpreter and colleague, introduced me to the complexities of the public transport-

ation systems, not only made the long distances between appointments easier but reduced the cost of taxis to a minimum. Everyone was interested in discussions of university education, for it is being re-examined currently in the face of the challenges posed by the new system which began after the second world war. The new system greatly expanded the number of universities, from about thirty to more than 200 universities and an additional number of "colleges". The number of students in higher education has increased sevenfold over the pre-war figure ; and with revisions in the relationships of secondary and university education, the university has added to its task the provision of "general education", whereas in the earlier period intensive specialization characterized the university system. Despite intensive efforts to keep university enrolments to a minimum figure through entrance examinations (which serve often only to delay a student's entrance), they are swollen beyond what most see as the actual capacity in facilities and teaching staffs. Many of the students are, moreover, disturbed in their studies by their uncertainties about employment upon graduation. In effect, the post-war system has flattened the peak of the educational pyramid, and without an increase in post-graduate studies, where opportunities are limited, universities feel that they have been asked to extend secondary education rather than to provide genuine higher education. What is meant by this is that the universities do not seem, as far as many are concerned, to provide the kind of intensive academic work which was the dominant pattern of the earlier system, influenced as it was by the idea of the German university.

This entire picture is now being looked at carefully. Many feel that the new system must be given further experimentation and implementation. Others feel that the old system was much better suited to the needs of Japan, since its history and social structure are more like Europe's than like America's — and certainly among the critics one feels that the whole new system is viewed as having been superimposed by the Americans. Prefectoral committees and a national committee are studying the problems carefully ; a number of organizations, like the Institute for Democratic Education, are exploring ways of having the new system seen as an attempt to democratize education and to adapt it to the needs of a society which is seeking to lay democratic social foundations. The social responsibilities of education are being reconsidered, despite the challenge that this represents to the old idea of the university. Actually, a number of problems are involved — financial problems make difficult the universalizing of education at the higher secondary and the university levels ; social problems complicate the extension

of democratic ideas through education, especially when the methods employed are those which reflect a non-democratic background ; and basic cultural problems make the development of fundamental democratic conceptions difficult, especially as one sees the impact of both a resurgent Oriental religious tradition and the absence in the Christian churches of a theological basis for the tasks of apologetics and positive cultural endeavour.

About ten days were spent outside of Tokyo, first, for a brief visit in Sendai, in Northwest Japan, and secondly, for a week in Kyoto, Osaka and Kobe, in Southeast Japan. In both of these centres opportunities were presented for university discussions, through specially arranged consultations and conferences, and through many private discussions ; in both centres, also, meetings with Christian professors and students were on the schedule. I was greatly impressed by the growing ferment of the kinds of issues which find their place in the University Commission. Discussions on a wide range of issues, theological, philosophical, educational, scientific, etc., have been taking place for a number of years, and the tendency at the present time is to deepen them, and relate them to one another.

The values of the University Commission program in Japan became especially clear during the closing week of my stay there, when the Christian professors' conference was held near Tokyo, and representatives were present from all parts of Japan. Social responsibility of university education, the issues of intellectual and academic freedom, the role of theology in relation to other disciplines, the possibilities of a distinctly Christian form of humanism, the quality of university life for students, and future plans for the University Commission — all of these, and other topics, were in the centre of the discussion for three or four days. Behind the discussion was the haunting question of students, which was often expressed in the student meetings : "What is it that we may appropriately expect of university education ? Can we ask of it a sense of meaning, some integration of studies, preparation for living itself ?" Such existential rooting of "the university question" made for vividness and realism in the discussions.

Philippines

The last major stop in the Far East was in the Philippines where I remained for about ten days. The tremendous growth and "boom" of education which I had already seen elsewhere in Asia seemed, in the Philippines, to be present with a vengeance. Riding through the streets of Manila one can see, almost any

place, universities and colleges on either or both sides. Some time was spent discussing questions with leaders in some of the institutions in Manila — at Far Eastern, University of the East, and the University of the Philippines. A four-day period was spent in Dumaguete City to visit Silliman University and participate in its annual faculty-staff retreat. Another visit to Los Banos near Manila, where the Agricultural and Forestry Schools of the University of the Philippines are located, was possible, and the remaining days were spent in Manila in discussions with student Christian leaders in the churches, the Federation of Churches, etc. The beginnings of a Student Christian Movement are present, with ten or more groups meeting regularly in the universities in Manila, with another centre in Los Banos, and a number of groups in such universities as Central Philippines and Silliman. These have the background of the Christian youth movements and are part of the work of the churches. However, there is a growing interest in exploring ways of achieving "autonomy" for a Student Christian Movement and of understanding its basic characteristics. There is interest also in a movement among Christian professors; several conferences have been held and some of the material has been widely read. Leadership, direction of effort, and a deepening of the ecumenical concerns are currently the needs, as further plans are made toward a true SCM. The Philippines represents a challenge to the outreach of the WSCF, and it is to be hoped that in the not-too-distant future a true SCM will be found there.

Common problems

As the plane took me back home across the Pacific, several basic problems came to mind again and again. Though I realized that Asia is not a simple homogeneous whole, that there are many "Asias", nevertheless I also realized that certain problems had been raised again and again. Let me note a few. Most of these are complex, interrelated problems with a number of facets. The first is the complex of problems represented by the tidal waves of students, the fear of losing academic standards, and the distractions represented by uncertainty about employment upon graduation. Each of these ties into the others and accents them. The second set of problems revolves around the relationships of higher education to changing social conditions, the responsibilities for general and not only specialized education, and the "base" upon which education rests in society and the lower educational levels. The third set of related problems revolves around problems in the "philosophy of

education", the desire that education should stimulate real inquiry, and the difficulties which university structure often represents for the provision of the kind of intellectual ferment which is required of it. This problem involves the carrying over into the present changing and already changed situation of an "idea of the university" from a classical Western past, and the need for adapting it to the needs of the present in a different cultural situation. The fourth set of problems involves immediately the problem of language, the rise of new forms of nationalism and desire for self-determination, and the resurgence of traditional religions which are often ill-adapted to the kind of vital relationships which are desired by those also interested in modern knowledge. The fifth set of problems centres around the role of the Christian college or university, especially at the point of determining whether its primary functions are "missionary" or educational, and what its relationships are, both to other educational institutions and to other cultural and religious forces within society. The sixth set of problems revolves around issues of intellectual freedom, related as these are to social responsibility, and to the role of faith in a living God with respect to the autonomy of the human mind.

On the surface, of course, these are formidable problems, large enough to occupy one's reflections and demand hard thinking for a long time. But they represent not only problems and issues of current importance. They seem also to be the kinds of challenges which are currently tending to turn the attention of Christian and non-Christian movements in higher education to a serious consideration of the university. Christians in Asia are increasingly aware of the stake that they have in the university, and there is a real need for them to take it seriously. And this is precisely the challenge to which they are currently responding — and as they discover new ways by which they can serve God in the university, they are also discovering the deeper and higher dimensions of the responsibility of the university in the world.

BOOK REVIEWS

Christian Faith and Contemporary Thought : a Review Article

ROBERT McAFEE BROWN

ETHICS, by Dietrich Bonhoeffer. SCM Press, London, 342 pp., 21s.

SUBJECT AND OBJECT IN MODERN THEOLOGY, by J. Brown. SCM Press, London, 214 pp., 18s.

ESSAYS PHILOSOPHICAL AND THEOLOGICAL, by Rudolf Bultmann. SCM Press, London, 337 pp., 21s.

NEW ESSAYS IN PHILOSOPHICAL THEOLOGY, by Anthony Flew and Alastair Macintyre. Eds. SCM Press, London, 274 pp., 21s.

AN EXISTENTIALIST THEOLOGY, by John Macquarrie. SCM Press, London, 252 pp., 18s.

The SCM Press is to be congratulated for introducing a new series of books which is designed to provide, as R. Gregor Smith says in his introduction to each volume, "a meeting place for the thought of contemporary theologians and philosophers". The books listed above comprise the first five volumes in the series, which is to be known as "The Library of Philosophy and Theology". They can be read independently of one another, though the order in which they are discussed below seems to this reviewer a logical way in which to approach them. But they all (with the possible exception of Bonhoeffer's) are concerned with the central problem of the dialogue between Christian faith and contemporary thought. For this reason, they deserve more than cursory treatment, and will be used as a basis for some extended comments on the theme upon which they all touch.

I

First off, what do we discover from this series about the general problem of relating Christian faith to contemporary thought? There are at least three reflections which these volumes substantiate.

1. Conversation is going on. This may not sound like a very world-shaking conclusion, and it must be understood in the sense

that conversation is going on *with concern on both sides*. Here we do not have Christian thinkers who are content to say to existentialism and logical positivism, "a plague on both your houses". There is no retreat into the comforting and irrelevant task of theologizing simply for the sake of the theologizing. There is a real attempt to relate the Christian faith to what is going on outside the Christian faith. The same is true of the philosophers who are not Christians. They are not using "nonsense" as an emotive word to describe theology. They are caught up in the same questions with which Christians are caught up, and they are trying to think through the meaning both of the questions and of a variety of answers to them. Fortunately, the number of their breed is vanishing who still insist with Miss G.E.M. Anscombe that they do not care to contribute to volumes which bear the word "theology" in the title (see Flew and Macintyre, *New Essays in Philosophical Theology*, p. 153). There is a recognition that the logicians are no more entitled than the theologians are simply to play their own parlor games in splendid (and pitiful) isolation from the rest of their fellows. Athens and Jerusalem (and Vienna) clearly share certain common concerns.

2. It is also significant that there is a new set of conversationalists. If there is one thing on which all the authors seem to be agreed, it is that the nineteenth century attempt to ally Christianity and philosophic idealism has proved to be abortive, at least for the twentieth century. The areas of philosophic concern in our day which the Christians must be willing to probe are clearly set out as existentialism and logical positivism. These are the movements which are to the fore in philosophy, and the present volumes indicate that Christians have been willing to take up the challenge provided by them and try to speak in terms that are relevant to them, both by way of appropriation and by way of criticism.

3. Another fact also emerges which is of considerable importance for the Christian who wishes to relate his faith to contemporary thought. The volumes make clear that it is an idle dream to talk about relating Christian faith to philosophy. The fact that so much discussion proceeds along these lines elsewhere is simply an indication of how out of touch Christians can get with the world in which they live. The point is that we can always relate Christian faith to a *philosophy* or to *philosophies*. The lumping together of all philosophy as "secular thought", or "non-biblical arrogance", betrays a kind of theological irresponsibility which is to be heartily decried. For philosophies are legion, and the task of seeing how Christian faith relates to one of them may be extraordinarily different from

seeing how it relates to another of them. (This is a point we shall examine more fully in our discussion of Bultmann.) Thus for utter precision, the title of this series might well have been "The Library of Philosophies and Theologies", since although this is more cumbersome, it is also more accurate — an advantage which cumbersome titles occasionally have. But just as there is no one philosophical position represented in the conversations, so too there is no one theological position. There is a variety, indeed a bewildering variety, of points of view subsumed under the category "Christian". This, however, is all to the good, since nothing could be more unfortunate in the developing of theological-philosophical conversations than the assumption that one had to hew to a particular party line on either side of the hyphen in order to be eligible for admission to the lists.

With these points in mind, let us now turn to look at the way in which each of the books cited fits into the overall pattern of concern for a meeting ground between philosophers and theologians, looking first at the three books most directly concerned with modern existentialism.

II

To this reviewer, the book by J. Brown, *Subject and Object in Modern Theology*, was the least adequate of the five. This is not an indictment of the author so much as it is a recognition of the extensive job that he was trying to do in very brief scope. The other books are able to proceed at a more leisurely pace, whereas Brown, in exactly 200 pages, is dealing with the thought of Kierkegaard, Heidegger, Buber and Barth, in addition to extensive introductory and concluding remarks! I happen, for better or for worse, to find myself taking issue with a number of his interpretations, and must record at least a few of these.

Brown points out correctly, I believe, and with impressive support from Barth, that theology is a conglomerate of all sorts of philosophy, and that therefore the Christian has to take the philosophical enterprise seriously. The dimension with which Brown proceeds to concern himself directly has to do with the subject-object problem. He points out that our use of the terms is post-Kantian, and concludes his historical survey by asserting that "there is a final objectivity which includes all others", for example that truth is one, but that we are involved in trying to know this truth, and thus we must always speak of Subject *and* Object, and never of one to the exclusion of the other. This may sound like a harmless enough thesis, but Brown goes on to show how the tendency to lose this balance is a great and recurring danger to modern thought.

He tries to do justice to the fact that, in Kierkegaard, there is no suggestion "of the loom of subjectivity running on with no yarn feeding from the bobbin of objectivity" (p. 58). But behind this kind of claim, intriguing as is the figure of speech by which it is supported, is a tendency to make too much of a systematizer out of Kierkegaard, an interpretation from which Kierkegaard would surely recoil most violently. Did Kierkegaard really fall into the trap from which he was trying to bail out Western thought, in his attack on Hegel? The case is at least "not proven". Brown also attributes to Kierkegaard a strong denial of the meaning of history; in the end it is "irrelevant". But this will not do. For all the comments he may have made in the *Fragments* about the unimportance of knowing specific information about Jesus' life, Kierkegaard places tremendous stress on the fact that the disciples knew Him in His humiliation, rather than His glory, for example when He was a man on earth, "the one girt with a towel", the offense, the lonely one. Here is where God acted. The historical dimension is inescapable.

The chapter on Heidegger is very brief, and the author admits that it is mainly second-hand. (Such a disclaimer offers a field day to an ambitious reviewer who can use first-hand knowledge to destroy second-hand information. However, this particular reviewer's knowledge of Heidegger is even leaner. So discussion of him will be deferred to the next volume under consideration.)

In treating Buber, Brown gives what appears to be a fairly sympathetic statement of his position, but then, after having exonerated Buber of the charge of inconsistency in maintaining that God can only be addressed and not expressed, he charges him in severest terms with having a position "not unfairly to be described as Pantheism" (p. 137). For Brown, Buber's God seems much closer to the God of Spinoza than to the God of the Bible. But this will not do either. Although Brown marshalls an impressive *catena* of quotations, it is significant that all of his material concerning Buber is drawn from *I and Thou*, and *Between Man and Man*. But there is ample evidence in other works of Buber, such as *The Prophetic Faith* and *Two Types of Faith*, to exonerate him from this charge. As he writes elsewhere, in the *Tales of the Hasidim*, Pantheism "destroys or stunts the greatest of all values, the reciprocal relationship between the human and the divine". Precisely, it must be asserted with emphasis that Buber is *not* "merely an existentialist veneer upon Hegel" (p. 139).

Brown shows clearly that, for Barth, "the subjectivity of God (that is, God's *Subjektsein*, being Subject) is the guarantee of the objectivity of the Christian revelation and its truth" (p. 141), even

though such a statement seems to Brown to indicate an ambivalence of terminology. However, the material on Barth as a whole seems least central to the main thesis of the book.

What do these excursions into the thought of four recent thinkers say to us? Primarily, they remind us that there has been "a progressive concretion of the Subject and an increasing emphasis upon the contribution of the Subject to the knowledge of the Object" (p. 170). This is particularly exemplified by Kierkegaard, Heidegger and Buber (and existentialism generally), though Brown seems to be straining the point to find this emphasis strongly in Barth. Brown goes on to point out, however, that "the Subject does not escape the control of the Object", and that even for a thinker like Sartre, "the concrete Subject is thoroughly embedded in the context of his environment and destiny" (p. 185). Furthermore, all possibilities of self-realization are limited, finally, as Heidegger constantly points out, by death. Or, in the less elegant, but apt, language of one of our American writers, Mr. James Thurber, "the claw of the sea puss gets us in the end".

Brown's book thus serves, in brief fashion, to open up the debate between Christianity and existentialism. The inadequacies of his treatment of Heidegger we need not bewail, since Macquarrie's *An Existentialist Philosophy* fills this gap in admirable fashion. Heidegger is one of the most difficult living thinkers to expound in English (and I have a suspicion that he may be difficult even for those who share his native tongue). Nevertheless Macquarrie has done a brilliant job, not only of making Heidegger intelligible, but even more important, of making him relevant and challenging to the Christian reader. He does this by the device of expounding Heidegger and Bultmann alternately, particularly as the latter is influenced by the former. Fortunately he does not concentrate on the famous issue of "demythologizing", and we are thus enabled to see the totality of Bultmann's thought as it has been formed both by the Christian *kerygma* and by Martin Heidegger.

For our purposes, it will not be necessary to trace the development of the thought of the book. Instead, let us ask, what can we see as some of the strengths and weaknesses of the existentialist approach to biblical faith which Bultmann makes?

The dangers are clear, and Macquarrie acknowledges them. (1) There can be distortion of the Christian faith, in the attempt to stress those elements which are particularly congenial to existentialism. (2) There can be perversion of the faith, when elements foreign to it slip in under the cloak of the existentialist approach.

(3) And there can be a surrender of the distinctiveness of the faith when it is "accommodated" to an alien framework.

But let it be said in Bultmann's favour, that he is always concerned first and foremost with the Gospel. It is not his concern to trim it to the demands of secular existentialism, and one of the greatest misconceptions (in America, at least) of Bultmann's task is that he is trying to "water down" the faith after the fashion of the earlier liberal theology. On the contrary, Bultmann's concern with existentialism is to make it a vehicle for the transmission of the faith. He is not trying to remove the "scandal" of the Gospel, but to get rid of the pseudo-scandals (first century cosmology, etc.) which enable people to dismiss the Christian faith for the wrong reasons. He is asking us to make it possible for the central claims of the *kerygma* to stand forth in such a way that they will demand decision from us. This, I repeat, is a highly laudable and important concern. It is the concern to make the Gospel speak to men where they are, in terms which will make them recognize that decision is demanded of them. And when Bultmann tries to (as I would prefer to say) "remythologize" in existentialist terms, he is, at the very least, compelling men to consider Christian faith and accept or reject it, rather than ignore it or reject it for the wrong reasons.

What, then, of the dangers to which Bultmann may be succumbing? It is clear that at some points the cloth of the New Testament is tailored to the existentialist pattern. Macquarrie points this out a number of times. Thus Bultmann's greatest danger would be in terms of the first of the three potential pitfalls noted above. It is also possible that the content of Christian faith may be drastically altered when it is put in existentialist terms, when, for example, the Cross is seen not so much as an "event" at a given point in time, but as something whose chief significance is that saving power has become available in my life. The latter is a large part of the meaning of the Cross for the Christian, but it is not far from this to a dehistoricizing of the event on Golgotha, and to a loosening from their moorings of the radically historical character of the acts of our salvation.

Macquarrie does not let Bultmann escape lightly with his project to demythologize the Bible. Not only is biblical cosmology difficult for modern man to understand, but "the symbolic language in which any existentialist position must be couched is even more difficult" (p. 176). This is a palpable hit in any discussion about "relevance". But more important, Macquarrie insists that we are not called upon to "give up speaking directly about God's activity, and confine ourselves merely to making statements about human

existence" (p. 177). The mythical can never be eliminated, for example, the claim that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. It cannot be restated merely in terms of *our* situation; it is also always a statement about God's activity in history, and thus not reducible to statements analyzable in existentialist terms alone.

However, Bultmann must not be accused too easily of letting Christian faith be "accommodated" to the existentialist world view. Where, for example, Heidegger speaks of "authentic" existence in terms of the "acceptance of nothingness", Bultmann, on the contrary, (as Macquarrie immediately goes on to say in describing his position by contrast), "goes to the Christian revelation for his answer to the question" (p. 136). And when Bultmann talks about grace — as he does very frequently — it is clear that he is moving in the atmosphere of Ephesus rather than in the atmosphere of the Black Forest. There is a strong evangelical note in his thought, which makes it clear that Melancthon's famous phrase, "our greatest enemies are the accommodating theologians", cannot with propriety be applied to him. As Macquarrie sums it up, concluding a section where he has been rather harsh to Bultmann, "his aim is not to destroy the historical foundation of our religion, but to exhibit it in its cosmic dimensions as authentic, repeatable possibility, significant for the existence of men today" (p. 192).

And finally, the very inconsistency of Bultmann's two major premises, or at least his refusal to let go of either one, may be the real sign of his greatness and his contribution to contemporary theology: "He puts forward a view of theology which calls for radical demythologizing, and the translation of all transcendent statements into statements about the understanding of the self. Yet at the same time he believes that God has acted decisively in Christ, and does not appear to realize the incompatibility of the two positions... Bultmann's greatness here shows itself in his steadfast refusal to follow out his own ideas to the bitter end" (p. 243).

Macquarrie's book is a model of clear exposition and thoughtful criticism, and of the five books in the series it stands out by all odds as the one with the greatest coherence and overall unity. Our extended comments on it will make it possible to deal more briefly with Bultmann's *Essays* themselves. These comprise a remarkable variety of themes, and for our purposes it will be sufficient to concentrate on those which illustrate the main theme of this review-article, namely, the possibilities and perils of the conversation between the theologians and the philosophers.

Interestingly enough, in this volume Bultmann seems more concerned to point out contrasts between Christian faith and other

faith options, than to build bridges (as of course he does in other connections *vis-à-vis* existentialism). This is particularly true in his essays on the relationship of the Gospel to Greek thought. This suggests quite clearly a fact which was noticed in our opening paragraphs, namely, that the problem is not that of relating Christian faith to philosophy *qua* philosophy, but of seeing what its affinities and dissimilarities are with a given philosophy. The content and intent of the given philosophy will determine the nature of the relationship, together with the theological standpoint of the person doing the relating. Thus it is not inconsistent for Bultmann to see marked affinities between Christianity and existentialism and fail to find such affinities between Christian and other modern (or ancient) world views. This point may sound like a truism, but it is not at all taken for granted in many of the contemporary orthodox polemics against "philosophy" as such.

One of the favorite antitheses in this volume is that between genuine belief in God and a *Weltanschauung*. The latter always becomes a kind of "general truth" at my disposal; it is a theory, an idea. This stands in sharpest contrast to belief in God, which breaks in on us in critical moments, which shapes and moulds us, which is — if you will — existential (cf. esp. pp. 6-9, 78-89, etc.). Here is one of the points where an existentialist demand for truth which is true *for me* helps to keep the factor of decision central for the Christian, and makes it impossible to reduce Christianity to a "philosophy of life". Do "Greece and Christianity" therefore involve an either/or for man? Bultmann will not make a clear-cut answer. He insists that the problem can never be resolved with a synthesis, and that it can never really be resolved because of the eschatological character of Christianity. Christianity lives within the world, where it must, for example, honour πολιτική τεχνή, but it also presses beyond the limits of the world. Thus "Greece and Christianity is *the continual problem of Christian living*" (pp. 88-89, italics in original).

Something of the same problem is raised in the essay, "Points of Contact and Conflict", where a similar dialectical approach is used. For example, "God's conflict with man" is the place where a point of contact is revealed, since, as Bultmann puts it, "There can be a conflict only where there is a relationship, and a perverted relationship is still a relationship" (p. 136). In similar fashion, other points of conflict are shown also to be points of contact. The thesis is illustrated historically by reference to stoicism, hellenistic mystery-religions and gnosticism. Between each of these and the Christian faith there is a strong conflict, but in the conflict also a point of contact (see pp. 138-150).

Again, in treating "Humanism and Christianity", Bultmann points out that the relationship is not to be decided on the basis of a simple either/or. Humanism makes some real contributions to Christianity, helping man see ways to master the world, to learn from science and use it for human need, etc. In similar fashion, humanism needs Christianity, or to put the matter more precisely, the Christian needs the challenge of humanism, and the humanist needs the correctives which Christianity provides. And both are joined "in the struggle against the arbitrary dictates of subjectivism" (p. 165).

These comments have barely touched on the wealth of material in Bultmann's volume. There are other essays dealing with specifically biblical subjects, and also some of strictly theological emphasis, where Bultmann's own concern for the Gospel is strikingly manifest.

III

The above three volumes, then, all deal with the relationship of Christian faith to various kinds of existentialist philosophy. The affinities are noted and many of the perils in the relationship are discussed. That there should be affinities with existentialism does not strike one as strange. What does initially strike one as strange, though exciting, is that Christian theologians and non-Christian philosophers should be conversing together so creatively and congenially as they do in the volume edited by Anthony Flew (a non-Christian) and Alastair Macintyre (a Christian), entitled *New Essays in Philosophical Theology*. At the risk of over-simplification, we shall refer to the philosophers who contribute essays to this volume as "logical positivists", so long as it is understood that this does not mean party-line adherence to, say, the very truculent attack on metaphysics contained in the first edition of A. J. Ayer's *Language, Truth and Logic*. For these writers all profess to be — and clearly are — concerned with theological questions. The non-Christians put very searching questions to the Christians, and the general framework of the discussion is clearly the radical empiricist framework which has been associated with positivism.

If it does nothing else, this book will lay a great many ghosts, and clear up a lot of misconceptions about the present state of positivist concerns. Another thing it could helpfully do would be to force contemporary theologians to borrow a page out of the positivists' book, and begin to write with the same kind of clarity, engagingness, wit and concern. Although the volume, being a symposium by sixteen writers, is inevitably uneven in quality, it is

still possessed of a high degree of literary brilliance, which stands as a judgment over much of the theological writing that muddies the current well-springs of living.

What, then, emerges out of this give-and-take between Christian and non-Christian philosophers? J. J. C. Smart, for example, has a paper on the proofs of the existence of God. He discusses them all, and shows not only the traditional problems connected with their supposed validity, but also a few more problems of his own. Does this mean that he has proved that God does not exist? Not at all. For him the proofs may not prove anything, but this does not for a moment settle the question of God's existence.

The next writer, however, J. N. Findley, attempts a "disproof" of God's existence. He makes an ingenious (but to my mind illicit) attempt, by setting up certain criteria of his own to which God somehow "must" conform if He is to exist, and then shows to his satisfaction that God can't conform and therefore doesn't exist. Q. E. D. There follows the attempt to show the "invalidity of the disproof" (a tightly knit set of words if there ever was one) followed by Findley's rebuttal. And in this rebuttal comes a very significant statement. I am not referring to his curious contention that atheism is "the purest form of Protestantism", but to his revealing comment that he is lodging a protest against idolatry: "I don't doubt that theism *can* be so held as not to involve any idolatrous implications, but I think it *hard* to be a theist without falling into idolatry, with all its attendant evils of intolerance and persecution" (p. 75). I contend that this is a highly religious statement, and that it is just possible that, by sweeping away the false gods, thinkers like Findley may be preparing the way for a visitation of grace.

Perhaps the most intriguing portion of the book is the section on "Theology and Falsification" (pp. 96-130), in which Flew poses to his Christian friends the question, "What would have to occur or to have occurred to constitute for you a disproof of the love of, or the existence of, God?" His point is that Christians are always unsatisfactorily "explaining away" those matters which raise questions about God's goodness, so that there is apparently no basis on which to establish evidence of His existence, let alone His love ¹.

¹ I feel constrained to remark, at least in a footnote, that in spite of the real sincerity and concern from which this question proceeds, and the importance of the Christian's wrestling with it, it appears to me somewhat to stack the cards.

It is as though the question were asked, "How evil a thing would your wife have to do for you to cease loving her?", as though such a relationship

Basil Mitchell's interesting reply takes the form of a parable which shows how personal commitment to God, not mere intellectual interest, precludes the possibility of discarding faith, even if experience appears to tell against it. After Flew's rebuttal to this, and R. M. Hare's statement, there is a long and curious appendix to the discussion, by I. M. Crombie, which tries the almost impossible task of arguing the matter on what are only thinly disguised Thomist premises, and in which there appears to be a disastrous confusion of meaning as between parable and allegory. At the end, Crombie offers the Christian three fortified retreats in his engagement with the positivist: the resurrection of the dead and the life to come, the revelation of God in Christ, and the assurance that God does not forsake the believer.

I must enter personal dissatisfaction with this whole line of approach. These are not "fortified retreats" which come only at the end of a fruitless natural theology (and which are very convenient, since the positivist can't attack them). If they are anything, they represent, on the contrary, the artillery for a vigorous attack. If they are the terms on which the battle is finally to be fought, let us by all means have done with the quibbling and temporizing of a Thomist approach at the start, show our hand boldly, and fight with vigour. Then at least the positivist would know where we stood. But I cannot imagine a positivist being particularly impressed if, when he won the skirmish in the arena of natural theology, he discovered that the game was now to proceed with three trump cards stolen from an entirely different and invisible deck.

A more creative approach appears towards the end of Thomas McPherson's "Religion as the Inexpressible". He redeems what is to me a rather unconvincing essay, by his final paragraph, which is worth quoting as indicative of the wisdom that can be gained through the discussion between Christian and positivist.

were based on the factor of proving worth to one another. The answer, of course, would be that nothing my wife could do would make me stop loving her. Her action might give me pain and real sorrow, but these would proceed *from* love, not as a repudiation of love. Hosea is a classic example here. He tried to put his wife out of the household when she was found guilty of adultery, but he could not, because of the simple fact that he still loved her.

Mutatis mutandis, these kinds of considerations would seem to apply to Mr. Flew's question. And Job's "Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him" may not be an attitude that can be justified before the bar of logic, but it is not, for all of that, an unworthy or irresponsible attitude.

One point to end. If it is foolish for theologians to refuse to learn from positivistic philosophy, it is disastrous for them to mistake the lesson. Another, and a preposterous, kind of linking of positivism and theology is possible, and has even been tried. This linking takes the form of an acceptance of the verification principle of the Vienna Circle — that a statement (unless it is analytic) "has sense", "is significant", "is meaningful", only if it is amenable to verification by sense perception — and issues in an attempt to bludgeon theological statements to make them meet this prescription. This is a forlorn hope, and it is a dangerous thing to do. The proper linkage consists in an accommodation of positivism to theology, not of theology to positivism. Theology does not gain by being reduced to the terms of any school of philosophy (p. 142-143).

To this writer, the most interesting contributor to the book is the non-Christian Anthony Flew. In addition to the above-mentioned discussion on falsification, he has contributed a long and penetrating article on the problem of "Divine Omnipotence and Human Freedom" (pp. 144-169), which must force any Christian believer to do a lot of hard thinking. He also participates in a vigorous BBC broadcast discussion with D. M. MacKinnon, on the problem of "Creation". The thing which is so winning about Flew is that he is not trying merely to be smart, or to score a parlor game victory over the unsuspecting theist. He is obviously deeply concerned about all of the right questions, even though he is unable to accept the Christian answers as adequate. He looks for all the possible points of agreement with his opponent, so that they can have as broad an area of common discourse as possible, and then with real clarity (and charm) points out his problems.

But he sees the real issues, and does not boggle over false ones. He can even say, in his discussion with MacKinnon *à propos* of religious language straining to say things it can't quite say, that "the heart of the matter is that the only satisfactory and the perhaps sufficient justification for the whole enterprise of trying to say things which it seems necessarily cannot be said lies just there: in Christ. 'In the riddle of a life lived and a death died' " (p. 185). Flew sees clearly what is at stake, even if he cannot accept the proffered Christian understanding of what is at stake. I am willing to believe that Anthony Flew is one of those who will not have to acknowledge the Kingdom of Heaven specifically in order to receive it.

On the whole, the positivists come off better in this volume than do the Christians. I do not believe that this need be cause for alarm. It is merely cause for the discussion to continue. There

must be more writing of this sort, for Christianity cannot afford to ignore the greatest philosophical challenge that it has faced in many a decade ¹.

IV

The books thus far cited in this article have all been concerned to deal with the relationship of Christian faith either to positivism or to existentialism. The final book does not fit into either category, and yet it may be, in the long run, the most enduring of the five volumes. This is Dietrich Bonhoeffer's posthumously published *Ethics*. Bonhoeffer is not primarily concerned to "build bridges". That was not his job in this book. He is primarily concerned to articulate a Christian ethic which is Christological through and through. In this direction he makes an ample beginning and has page after page that flashes with insight. The one disappointment in the volume is its obvious incompleteness. At his death, some portions were still unwritten, others existed only in outline form, and still others that had been hidden from the Nazis were never found. But what we have — 334 pages worth — will take its place as an important contribution to the restatement of Christian ethics in our day.

The present essay is not the place for a full-length review. Suffice it to say that Bonhoeffer's creativity of approach, his willingness to break new ground and take issue with his Lutheran past, and above all the fresh way in which he continually relates theology and ethics, makes his book a noteworthy one in all respects. Particularly telling are his treatments of ethics as "formation" (Part I, 1); the section on the "four mandates", a notion that is central to the entire volume (pp. 73-78); the relationship of eschatology to immediate ethical concern (pp. 79-101); the material on "deputyship" (pp. 194-197); the distinction between personal and "real" ethos (pp. 286-295); and the chapter on "The Possibility of the Word of the Church to the World" (pp. 318-325). The reader who reads this much will read the rest.

Bonhoeffer's approach *is* central to the matters under discussion in this article to this extent: he exhibits a way of approaching contemporary thought which is different from any of the authors

¹ I cannot forbear to conclude a discussion of this book without quoting the opening sentence of a long article entitled "Tertullian's Paradox". The opening sentence goes, "This paper does not deal directly either with Tertullian or with his paradox". It is a joy to jaded eyes to encounter a *non sequitur* as bold and forthright as this.

previously discussed. He comes to the reader with an unambiguous, unashamed, Christologically-oriented faith. He does not try to "prove" it; he does not whittle it down to the presuppositions of his readers; he simply proclaims it, saying in effect, "Believe. And if you will believe, you will find that He to whom you have committed yourself is the Truth, and that He will shed light on everything else and reveal its truth — or falsity."

There is a strength and a compellingness about this which is not without its real impact. When all is said and done, we need the *kerygma* first, before we try to become apologists, bridge builders or Christian philosophers.

World Council of Churches' Publications

THE LAITY

We are giving here a very important statement which has been issued by the WCC Department on the Laity and commended by the Central Committee to its member churches for study and comment. The Department would be very grateful for any comments or suggestions arising from this statement. They should be addressed to Pastor Hans-Ruedi Weber, 17, route de Malagnou, Geneva, Switzerland. The price for 100 copies of the statement is Sw. frs. 5; \$1.20; 8s.

THE MINISTRY OF THE LAITY IN THE WORLD

The Department on the Laity has been drawn by its work to consider not merely what the Church ought to be doing, but what the Church *is*. We have come to see that the *whole* Church shares Christ's ministry in the world and that the effective exercise of this ministry must largely be by church members, when they are dispersed in the life of the world. As was said in Evanston: "The real battles of faith today are being fought in factories, shops, offices, and farms, in political parties and government agencies, in countless homes, in the press, radio and television, in the relationship of nations. Very often it is said that the Church should 'go into these spheres', but the fact is that the Church *is* already in these spheres

¹ Report of Section VI of the Assembly of the World Council of Churches, Evanston, page 11.

in the persons of its laity.”¹ There is nothing new in this conception — for our Lord said “Ye are the salt of the earth...” — but it is a truth which has been obscured over many periods of the Church’s life.

The salt fulfils its function only if, after having been assembled and cleansed, it is scattered again to be dissolved. Likewise the Church lives by a process of assembling and scattering. It is brought together from all peoples, occupations and groups for worship and for other recognizable “organized activities”. It is scattered as its members, and predominantly its lay members, disperse themselves in the life of the world. As salt fulfils its function only when scattered and dissolved, so an indispensable part of the ministry of the Church is exercised when the Church is in its scattered phase. This process of withdrawal and return, of being assembled and being scattered, is not accidental but essential to the Church’s life.

When the Church is assembled it is then a token of the Communion of Saints, rendering praise and intercession to God on behalf of the world. Yet when the life of the Church is brought under the judgment of God’s Word, we have to recognize that this judgment must fall on its *whole* life — scattered as well as assembled. One test of the life of the Church in its assembled aspect — in worship, church government and organizations — is how this part of its life contributes to the life of the scattered Church. Thus it is the task of the pastor and other professional church workers not only to be concerned with the assembled Church, but to prepare the laity for their distinctive ministry.

None of us fully understands, in our complex modern world, what this ministry of the laity really is. God reveals it to those who listen; every situation in His world can speak to us. But it is becoming clear that one of the main tasks of the Church, when it assembles its scattered members, is to listen to them speaking of their trials and difficulties, hopes and fears, opportunities and needs, and even simply about the facts of life in the world. The assembled Church cannot become a teaching Church until it listens. We urgently need a Church that will teach out of the experience of listening. Certain signs of this kind of teaching are emerging: (i) a growing body of Christian teaching about work, in the light of the Gospel and of an understanding of the facts of work in our world; (ii) the adaptation of instruction on prayer and personal devotion to meet the actual conditions in which the scattered Church lives; (iii) a more serious and continuous effort to discern where, in the modern world, the Church can and must, in obedience, fight for justice, mercy, freedom and truth.

Questions

The Evanston Report says: "The fact is that the Church is already in these spheres in the persons of its laity" (see first paragraph above). In your experience does this fact make any difference? Has the salt lost its savour?

Does the teaching and preaching given in your churches provide the laity with an adequate preparation for their ministry in the world?

To what degree do the activities of your churches prepare their members for, or divert them from, their ministry in the world?

How can the assembled Church listen to its scattered members so that its teaching may become more relevant?

What is implied for the training of pastors when we say that "it is the task of the pastors and of other professional church workers to prepare the laity for their distinctive ministry"?

* * *

The Department on the Laity has also published an attractively illustrated booklet entitled *Signs of Renewal*. Its contents are well described in the foreword:

Lay Institutes, Evangelical Academies, Laymen's Colleges or whatever these centres are called, do you know them? The introduction to this booklet describes their aim and work, and then you are invited to make a trip through Europe, visiting the most important centres. The Directors of the Institutes will tell you about the origin and history, the present work and future plans of the centres in their respective countries. We shall first visit the best-known centres: the *Evangelische Akademien* in Germany. Our journey will then take us to Sweden, Finland, Scotland, England, Holland, France, Italy and Switzerland. We shall visit the oldest centre in Europe, the *Sigtuna-stiftelsen* in Sweden, and the well known Dutch national institute *Kereken Wereld*. But we shall also have a glimpse of the more recent, still unknown, centres which do such worth-while pioneering work. Finally our journey will bring us to the YMCA-sponsored *International Centre at Schloss Mainau* and to the world-famous *Ecumenical Institute* at the Château de Bossey near Geneva...

This booklet can be obtained from the World Council office 17, route de Malagnou, Geneva, for Sw. frs. 2; \$.50; 3s, with a ten per cent discount on orders of twenty-five copies or more.

RAPID SOCIAL CHANGE

An ecumenical study on the theme, "The Common Christian Responsibility towards Areas of Rapid Social Change", was launched a year ago by the World Council of Churches' Department on Church and Society, and a number of interesting statements have been issued, outlining the purpose and scope of this study. The most recent is entitled *Second Statement on the Issues of Rapid Social Change*. SCM study groups may have up to twenty-five copies of this forty-page booklet free by writing to the World Council office in Geneva.

By areas of rapid social change this study refers primarily to those countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America where, as the Evanston Assembly observed, society is characterized by the urge to national self-determination in political and economic matters; where there is a growing shift of social, economic and political authority from those persons and institutions which possessed it by inheritance or tradition, to those who exercise it because of the function they perform, and where peoples have awakened to a new sense of fundamental human rights and justice and are in revolt against enslaving economic and social conditions. The *Second Statement* describes the problems raised in defining the Christian witness in the four main areas of the study: The Impact of the West, Social Change in Rural Communities, Industrialization and Urbanization, and Responsible Citizenship.

The section on "The Impact of the West" is concerned with the new obligations of Western countries for the social and economic development of the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America. The ethical problems involved in providing economic aid and technical assistance, and in developing better programs for international economic trade and cooperation are among the questions considered in this section.

In "Social Change in Rural Communities" the statement points out that the forces of rapid social change are having their greatest impact on the rural areas of Asia, Africa and Latin America. The growing use of money and credit, the technical improvements in agriculture, the changes in land tenure and programs of land redistribution, the expansion of roads and other means of transportation are greatly altering the pattern of village life. In many cases the improvements in material conditions resulting from these changes

are offset by new problems and dangers. The report notes that there is much that Christians can do to help ensure a properly balanced change in rural life, and to reduce the dangers of village decay and disintegration.

The section on "Industrialization and Urbanization" calls attention to the effect of the rapid growth of industry and the development of the large industrial towns, which seem to be an inevitable accompaniment of social and economic development. There is a need for planning of social development to avoid the mass society of the large urban centre, and at the same time the Church must be ready to help youth and other groups who are bewildered by the demands of living in the new urban situation.

Finally, the report deals with the problem of "Responsible Citizenship". How can the Christian help to develop political institutions which are conducive to human dignity and welfare? What forms of participation in political life are permissible for the Christian? What is the attitude of the Christian to the nationalist movement?

It should be emphasized that this is a document for study, and that it contains only suggestions of possible answers which Christians may give to the questions raised. Study groups on rapid social change are being organized in many different countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America, and over the next two years many Christians will participate in this program. We are sure that student groups in many countries will find it worthwhile to share in this enquiry.

